MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

EDITED BY W. J. ROLFE

WEST PHILADELPHIA HIGH SCHOOL FOR GIRLS
FORTY-EIGHTH AND WALNUT STREETS
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A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

EDITED, WITH NOTES

BY

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ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK ·:· CINCINNATI ·:· CHICAGO
AMERICAN BOOK COMPANY

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PREFACE

THIS edition of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* was first published in 1877. As now revised it is substantially a new edition on the same general plan as the revised *Merchant of Venice* and other plays which have preceded it.

The greater part of the notes on *textual variations* have been either omitted or abridged. This play, like most of the others read in schools and colleges, is now among the twelve plays that Dr. Furness has edited. No teacher can afford to do without his encyclopedic volumes, in which all the readings and notes of the early and the standard modern editions are epitomized, together with large extracts from the best commentators and much admirable criticism by Dr. Furness himself. His edition is, in fact, a condensed library of the literature relating to the play, giving in compact and inexpensive form a vast amount of valuable matter, much of which would otherwise be inaccessible to the great majority of teachers and students.

I have also omitted most of the "Critical Comments" from the introduction, as the books from which they were taken are now to be found in public and school libraries. For these extracts I have substituted familiar comments of my own, and have added more of the same kind in the Appendix. A concise account of Shakespeare's *metre* has also been inserted as an introduction to the Notes.

Minor changes have been made throughout the Notes. Some have been abridged, some have been expanded, and new ones have been added, including a considerable number in place of those referring to my former editions of other plays. The book is now absolutely complete in itself.

I believe that teachers will prefer the new edition to the old one; but both can be used, without serious inconvenience, in the same class or club.

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'I WILL WALK UP AND DOWN HERE'

INTRODUCTION TO A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

The History of the Play

A Midsummer-Night's Dream was first printed in 1600, when quarto editions were brought out by two independent publishers, one of which appears, from internal evidence, to be a reprint of the other. The folio text, the only other early one, followed this second quarto, some of its obvious misprints being copied.

The earliest known reference to the play is in the *Palladis Tamia* of Francis Meres, published in 1598. The date of its composition has been the subject of much controversy, and the decisions of the critics concerning it have been widely divergent, ranging from 1590 to 1598 and including every year between. There can, however, be no reasonable doubt that it was one of the earliest of the plays, and that it belongs to the first group of Shakespeare's comedies. In its present form it

is the bright consummate flower of this group, but, though no early title-page refers to it as "corrected," the internal evidence indicates that it was begun at a very early period in Shakespeare's career as a writer and not finished until several years later, or was finished very early and revised several years later. It is remarkable that only two or three of the critics have recognized this fact. Verplanck, in his edition of the play (New York, 1847), was, I believe, the first (he says he does "not know that it has appeared so to any one else") to reckon the play as one of those which "were first written in a comparative immaturity of the author's genius, and afterwards received large alterations and additions." He thinks that "the rhyming dialogue, and the peculiarities of much of the versification in those scenes, the elaborate elegance, the quaint conceits, and artificial refinements of thought in the whole episode (if it may be termed so) of Helena and Hermia and their lovers, certainly partake of the taste and manner of the more juvenile comedies [*Love's Labour's Lost, The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, etc.], while in other poetic scenes 'the strain we hear is of a higher mood,' and belongs to a period of fuller and more conscious power." He therefore concludes that the play "was originally written in a very different form from that in which we now have it, several years before the date of its present shape," and that it "was subsequently remodeled, after a long interval, with the addition of the heroic personages, and all the dialogue between Oberon and Titania, . . . the rhyming

dialogue and the whole perplexity of the Athenian lovers being retained, with slight change, from the more boyish comedy."

Grant White, ten years later (1857), says of the play: "Although as a whole it is the most exquisite, the daintiest, and most fanciful creation that exists in poetry, and abounds in passages worthy even of Shakespeare in his full maturity, it also contains whole scenes which are hardly worthy of his 'prentice hand that wrought *Love's Labour's Lost*, *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*, and *The Comedy of Errors*, and which yet bear the unmistakable marks of his unmistakable pen. These scenes are the various interviews between Demetrius and Lysander, Hermia and Helena, in acts ii. and iii. It is difficult to believe that such lines as

> 'Do not say so, Lysander, say not so.
> What though he love your Hermia? *Lord, what though?*'

and

> 'When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?
> Is 't not enough, is 't not enough, *young man*,
> That I did never, no, nor never can,' etc.—

it is difficult to believe that these, and many others of a like character which accompany them, were written by Shakespeare after he had produced even *Venus and Adonis* and the plays mentioned above, and when he could write the poetry of the other parts of this very comedy. There seems, therefore, warrant for the opinion that this drama was one of the very first conceptions of the young poet; that, living in the rura:

district where tales of household fairies were rife among his neighbours, memories of these were blended in his youthful reveries with images of the classic heroes that he found in the books which we know he read so eagerly; that perhaps in some midsummer's night he, in very deed, did dream a dream and see a vision of this comedy, and went from Stratford up to London with it partly written; that, when there, he found it necessary at first to forego the completion of it for labour that would find readier acceptance at the theatre; and that afterward, when he had more freedom of choice, he reverted to his early production, and in 1594 worked it up into the form in which it was produced."

Whether this be in all particulars the history of the composition of the play or not, it seems to me the most satisfactory explanation of its peculiarities and inequalities that has been suggested. The crudeness of the versification in the lines that Grant White quotes has no parallel, or anything approaching to a parallel, anywhere else in Shakespeare's work. It is difficult, indeed, to believe that he could have written them even in his schoolboy days. It would seem that they must date back to a period many years before he touched up the *Titus Andronicus* (if he had anything to do with that play) or the 1 *Henry VI.* There is not a line so poor, so thin, so palpably and clumsily padded, in either of those patched-up dramas. If possible, they are worse than the best verses of Francis Bacon.

Though we have reason to believe that the play was

popular, few early notices of its representation are extant. According to a manuscript at Lambeth Palace, it was performed at the Bishop of Lincoln's house on Sunday night, September 27th, 1631; but the *name* of the play is a forgery in a later hand.[1] Archbishop Laud exerted his influence to punish this profanation of the Sabbath; and the following order is taken from a decree made at the time by a self-constituted court among the Puritans: —

"Likewise wee doe order, that Mr. Wilson, because hee was a speciall plotter and contriver of this business, and did in such a brutishe manner acte the same with an asses head, and therefore hee shall, uppon Tuisday next, from six of the clocke in the morning till six of the clocke at night, sitt in the Porter's Lodge at my Lords Bishopps House, with his feete in the stocks, and attyred with his asse head, and a bottle of hay sette before him, and this subscription on his breast: —

> Good people I have played the beast,
> And brought ill things to passe:
> I was a man, but thus have made
> Myselfe a silly asse."

Bottom seems then to have been considered the chief character in the play; and "The merry conceited humours of Bottom the Weaver" were made into

[1] Some critics doubt whether it was Shakespeare's play, as Mr. Wilson is mentioned as the "contriver" of it; but that may refer either to his being responsible for the representation or to his playing the part of Bottom, for which, as we see, he was punished.

a farce or droll,[1] which was frequently played in private after the suppression of the theatres. "When the publique theatres were shut up," says Francis Kirkman,[2] "and the actors forbidden to present us with any of their tragedies, because we had enough of that in ernest; and comedies, because the vices of the age were too lively and smartly represented; then all that we could divert ourselves with were these humours and pieces of plays, which passing under the name of a merry conceited fellow called Bottom the Weaver, Simpleton the Smith, John Swabber, or some such title, were only allowed us, and that but by stealth too, and under the pretence of rope dancing and the like."

Pepys saw the play performed, September 29th, 1662, and thus records the fact in his *Diary:* "To the King's Theatre, where we saw 'Midsummer's Night's Dream,' which I had never seen before, nor shall ever again, for it is the most insipid ridiculous play that ever I saw in my life."

In 1692 the play was changed into an opera under the title of *The Fairy Queen*, and performed in London on a very splendid scale. In 1716 Richard Leveridge adapted from the play *A Comick Masque of Pyramus and Thisbe*, which was performed at the theatre in Lincoln's Inn Fields, and was printed in London the same year. In

[1] "The merry conceited humors of Bottom the Weaver, as it hath been often publikely acted by some of his Majesties comedians, and lately privately presented by several apprentices for their harmless recreation, with great applause." 4to, London, 1661.

[2] *The Wits*, 1673.

1755 Garrick produced, at Drury Lane, an opera taken from *A Midsummer-Night's Dream*, and entitled *The Fairies*, the parts of the clowns being entirely omitted. In 1763 he brought out the original play, with the interlude restored, but it was coldly received, and was performed only once. It was then cut down to an afterpiece by Colman, under the title of *A Fairy Tale*, the supernatural characters being alone retained. In that form it was somewhat more successful, and was again produced at the Haymarket Theatre in 1777, with the addition of some songs from Garrick's version. The next presentation of which I find a record was in January, 1816, when a version by Frederic Reynolds, in three acts, with the clowns' play restored, was given.

In more recent times the play has seldom been put upon the stage, and it is not likely that the experiment will be often repeated. As Hazlitt has said: "The *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, when acted, is converted from a delightful fiction into a dull pantomime. . . . Fancy cannot be embodied any more than a simile can be painted; and it is as idle to attempt it as to personate *Wall* or *Moonshine*. Fairies are not incredible, but fairies six feet high are so. Monsters are not shocking, if they are seen at a proper distance. When ghosts appear at midday, when apparitions stalk along Cheapside, then may the *Midsummer-Night's Dream* be represented without injury at Covent Garden or at Drury Lane. The boards of a theatre and the regions of fancy are not the same thing."

The Sources of the Plot

The plot of the play seems to be the poet's own, except for the few hints he may have got from Chaucer's *Knightes Tale* and the life of Theseus in North's *Plutarch*. For the interlude of Pyramus and Thisbe he was doubtless indebted to Golding's translation of Ovid and Chaucer's *Legende of Goode Women*. Attempts have been made to prove that certain poems in which Puck, or Robin Goodfellow, figures were written before the play, and that Shakespeare used them; but it has been satisfactorily proved that the play was the earlier. The popularity of the comedy led to the writing up of the old fairy stories by others. Here, as in other instances, Shakespeare had his imitators and plagiarists, but there is no evidence that he imitated or plagiarized from anybody. As Grant White remarks, "The plot of *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* has no prototype in ancient story." Oberon, Titania, and Robin Goodfellow were familiar personages in the popular fairy mythology of the time, but Shakespeare has made them peculiarly his own. He was "the remodeler, and almost the inventor of our fairy system."

General Comments on the Play

The *Midsummer-Night's Dream*, as Verplanck remarks, "is, in several respects, the most remarkable composition of its author, and has probably contributed more to his general fame, as it has given a more peculiar evi-

dence of the variety and brilliancy of his genius, than any other of his dramas. Not that it is in itself the noblest of his works, or even one of the highest order among them; but it is not only exquisite in its kind — it is also original and peculiar in its whole character, and of a class by itself. . . . It stands by itself, without any parallel; for *The Tempest*, which it resembles in its preternatural personages and machinery of the plot, is in other respects wholly dissimilar, is of quite another mood in feeling and thought, and with, perhaps, higher attributes of genius, wants its peculiar fascination. Thus it is that the loss of this singularly beautiful production would, more than that of any other of his works, have abridged the measure of its author's fame, as it would have left us without the means of forming any estimate of the brilliant lightness of his 'forgetive' fancy, in its most sportive and luxuriant vein. . . . It has, in common with all his comedies, a perpetual intermixture of the essentially poetical with the purely laughable, yet is distinguished from all the rest by being (as Coleridge has happily defined its character) 'one continued specimen of the dramatized lyrical.' Its transitions are as rapid, and the images and scenes it presents to the imagination as unexpected and as remote from each other, as those of the boldest lyric; while it has also that highest perfection of the lyric art, the pervading unity of the poetic spirit — that continued glow of excited thought — which blends the whole rich and strange variety in one common effect of gay and dazzling brilliancy."

The German Gervinus well says: "That which Shakespeare received in the rough form of fragmentary popular belief he developed in his playful creation into a beautiful and regulated world. . . . He has given form and place to the fairy kingdom, and with the natural creative power of genius he has breathed a soul into his merry little citizens, thus imparting a living centre to their nature and their office, their behaviour and their doings. He has given embodied form to the invisible, and life to the dead, and has thus striven for the poet's greatest glory; and it seems as if it was not without consciousness of this his work that he wrote in a strain of self-reliance that passage in this very play: —

> 'The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
> Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven;
> And as imagination bodies forth
> The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
> Turns them to shapes and gives to airy nothing
> A local habitation and a name.'"

This debt which our literature owes to Shakespeare in lifting the fairies of vulgar superstition to the level of poetry is, moreover, the keynote of the graceful tribute that Hood pays the dramatist in his *Plea of the Midsummer Fairies*. In this charming poem Titania is represented as feeling a sad foreboding that the fairy race is doomed to extinction and oblivion. The fairies are assembled in one of their forest haunts when the Queen addresses them: —

"'Alas,' quoth she, 'ye know our fairy lives
Are based upon the fickle faith of men.
* * * * * *
Like human gossamers, we perish when
We fade and are forgot in worldly ken.'"

She has seen old Saturn, or Time, ranging the woods, and fears that he is in pursuit of her subjects with hostile intent. Just then he appears, and the fairies huddle together like frightened sheep, while the Queen begs him to spare them; and then one after another of the fays comes forward to plead with him. But their appeals, instead of moving him to mercy, only enrage him; and at last he is on the point of sweeping them away with his awful scythe, when the apparition of Shakespeare interposes and tells Saturn bluntly that he shall not harm or frighten his protégés. The god then turns his wrath against the presumptuous advocate of the elves, and brings down his scythe upon the poet's head; but

"the blade flashed on the dinted ground
Down through his steadfast foe, yet made no scar
On that immortal shade or deathlike wound;
But Time was long benumbed, and stood ajar,
And then with baffled rage took flight afar."

The grateful fairies gather about their deliverer, and Titania cries:—

"Nod to him, elves, and flutter round about him,
And quite enclose him with your pretty crowd,
And touch him lovingly, for that, without him,
The silkworm now had spun our dreary shroud;
But he hath quite dispersed death's tearful cloud.

> And Time's dread effigy scared quite away.
> Bow to him, then, as tho' to me ye bowed,
> And his dear wishes prosper and obey
> Wherever love and wit can find a way."

And then Titania,

> "with a graceful hand,
> Waves thrice three splendid circles round his head,
> Which, tho' deserted by the radiant wand,
> Wears still the glory which her waving shed.
>
> * * * * * *
>
> Goodly it was to see that glory shine
> Around a brow so lofty and benign!"

The whole poem is redolent with imaginative beauty, and the tribute to Shakespeare is one that he himself would have been delighted to accept.

The title of the play of course does not refer to the time of the action, which is the closing days of April and the first of May, but to the season that suggested it, or to which it was appropriate; like *The Winter's Tale*, which is a tale "*for* winter," not *of* winter. In choosing a name for the *Dream*, the poet not improbably had in mind the many superstitions connected with Midsummer Eve (the eve of June 23d, preceding the festival of the Nativity of John the Baptist) — a season which, moreover, was "anciently thought to be productive of mental vagaries," or "midsummer madness," as it is called in *Twelfth Night* (iii. 4. 61). John Heywood, in his *Epigrams and Proverbs*, asks: —

> "As mad as a March hare! Where madness compares,
> Are not Midsummer hares as mad as March hares?"

Some have thought that the play got its name from having been originally produced in midsummer, but there is no evidence of this.

The time of the action, according to the opening speech of Theseus, should cover "four days"; and Hippolyta, in her reply, says: —

> "Four days will quickly steep themselves in night,
> Four nights will quickly dream away the time," etc.

This is plain enough, and the dwelling on the four days and nights seems distinctly intended to call attention to the time of the action. But the actual time covers only three days. Hermia and Lysander, in the first scene, resolve to flee from Athens "to-morrow night," and during that night only do they become the victims of the fairy spells. It is on the very next morning that they are discovered by Theseus; and the play closes at midnight of that day. After the interlude of the clowns, Theseus says: —

> "The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve.
> Lovers, to bed; 't is almost fairy time.
> I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn
> As much as we this night have overwatch'd.
> This palpable-gross play hath well beguil'd
> The heavy gait of night. Sweet friends, to bed."

The epilogue of the fairies occupies a few minutes of the day that begins at midnight, but the four days and nights of the first scene were to precede the marriage of Theseus, which had taken place on the forenoon of the third day.

In the scene in which Bottom rejoins his fellow-actors — which could not have been much later than midday — Snug says: —

"Masters, the duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more married; if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men."

Soon Bottom comes in, and says that "the duke hath dined"; and the dinner hour of the higher classes in Shakespeare's time was at eleven o'clock. Harrison says: "With us the nobility, gentry, and students do ordinarily go to dinner at eleven before noon, and to supper at five, or between five and six at afternoon;" the hours of these meals for tradesmen and others being "twelve at noon and six at night."

The afternoon, as Bottom proceeds to explain, is to be spent in preparations for the play in the evening; and he and his companions certainly have enough to do to occupy the time: —

"Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say, it is a sweet comedy. No more words; away! go, away!"

There are other palpable inconsistencies in the play, some of which are more remarkable than that concerning

the duration of the action, which is not unlike what we find in several other of the plays. The clowns' interlude is arranged and partially rehearsed in two scenes of acts i. and iii. In the former of these the parts are assigned, and among these are Thisbe's mother and father and Pyramus's father, none of whom appear in the play as finally performed. Of the portion rehearsed not a word is repeated at the performance. This rehearsal, moreover, must have been the only one; for Bottom disappears in the early part of it, and does not return until the scene already mentioned in which directions are given to the actors, but nothing is said about another rehearsal. And yet Philostrate, just before the performance, tells of his amusement when he saw the play rehearsed!

The performance was on the night of the new moon, when of course the moon would not be visible; but in the partial rehearsal, when Snout asks, "Doth the moon shine that night?" reference is made to the calendar, and Quince says, "Yes, it doth shine that night." And no critic, so far as I know, has noted that in the fairy epilogue Puck says: —

> "Now the hungry lion roars,
> And the wolf behowls the moon,"

implying that the moon is then shining, at midnight.

Many critics have believed that the play was written and performed on the occasion of some marriage in high life; but no two of them agree whose marriage it was.

There is no internal or external evidence in favour of this view, except the fact that the wedding of Theseus and Hippolyta is celebrated in the play. A German critic remarks that it would be "strange and almost impertinent to present a noble patron with a wedding tribute in the form of a play in which love is made a subject for laughter and represented only from a comic aspect, and where even the marriage feast of Theseus appears in a comic light, owing to the manner in which it is celebrated." This seems to me hypercritical, as there is nothing cynical or satirical in the treatment of love or marriage in the play, and the comic interlude at the festival is selected by Theseus himself.

For myself, I do not believe that the play was composed for such an occasion, but if it was — and whether it was or not — Elizabeth may have been present at the original performance. The graceful tribute to the Virgin Queen appears to have been the only one of its kind that she ever received from Shakespeare ; nor did he celebrate her in verse after her death, which led some of his contemporaries to express their surprise at his silence on the occasion.

Possibly the poet may also have had Elizabeth in mind when he put the praise of virginity into the mouth of Theseus while urging Hermia to consider well whether she can "endure the livery of a nun." He adds : —

> "Thrice blessed they that master so their blood,
> To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;

> But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd
> Than that which withering on the virgin thorn
> Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness."

It is the only instance of such praise of a nun's life in Shakespeare, and it is an anachronism here, being a mediæval rather than a classical idea. Theseus, who is on the point of being married, naturally adds the suggestion that wedded life is "earthlier happy," that is, happier from the earthly or worldly point of view as distinguished from the monastical or ecclesiastical.

There can be no doubt that Elizabeth was "the fair vestal throned by the west" in the other passage to which I have referred; but the attempts to find in it other personal or allegorical allusions seem to me foolish and far-fetched. Bishop Warburton fancied that the "mermaid on a dolphin's back" was Mary, Queen of Scotts, who reigned over "a kingdom situate in the sea," and was fair and unchaste, as mermaids were wont to be. The "rude sea" was "Scotland, encircled by the ocean," rising in arms against the regent while she was in France, but becoming quiet on her return The reference to the dolphin suggests her marriage with the Dauphin of France; *Dolphin* being the ancient spelling of *Dauphin*, found regularly in the early editions of Shakespeare. The *stars* that "shot madly from their spheres" were "the Earls of Northumberland and Westmoreland, who fell in her quarrel," and the Duke of Norfolk, "whose projected marriage with her was attended with such fatal consequences."

Mr. N. J. Halpin, on the other hand (in his *Oberon's Vision*, 1843), sees in the reference to Cupid "flying between the cold moon and the earth" a veiled allusion to Robert Dudley, Earl of Leicester, "wavering in his passion between Cynthia, or Elizabeth, and Tellus, goddess of the Earth, or the Lady Douglas, Countess of Sheffield," but finally fixing his love on the "little western flower," Lettice, at that time the wife of Walter, Earl of Essex, who, previous to this unhappy attachment, was not only pure and innocent in conduct, but unblemished also in reputation; after which she became not only deeply inflamed with a criminal passion, and still more deeply (perhaps) stained with a husband's blood, but the subject, also, of shame and obloquy.

Mr. Gerald Massey imagines that the episode of Helena and Hermia contains a reference to Lady Elizabeth Vernon's jealousy of her cousin, Lady Rich, though he agrees with Mr. Halpin that the "little western flower" is the Countess of Essex, who was the mother of Lady Rich and the aunt of Lady Vernon.

All these interpretations, as I have said, seem to me mere foolery. They simply show that when a critic fancies that there is an allegory in a passage he can find it, for he "reads it into" the passage; and each man easily finds a different allegory. These things are what Dowden, in dealing with similar fantastic theories concerning Shakespeare's *Sonnets*, aptly calls "the pranks of Puck among the critics." We can imagine that the mischievous elf drops some magic juice on their eyelids

to make them see what the poet never dreamed of. He, like Puck, would laugh at the results, and exclaim with Puck, "Lord, what fools these mortals be!"

There is not the slightest reason to believe that Shakespeare ever introduces allegory into his plays, though some of the critics have found it in *The Tempest* and elsewhere as well as here. In the present passage the falling of Cupid's arrow upon the flower appears to have no other purpose than to suggest how the flower got its magic potency.

The reference to the mermaid and the stars shooting from their spheres was not improbably suggested by the celebrated festival at Kenilworth, in 1575, in honour of Elizabeth. "Triton in the likeness of a mermaid," according to Gascoigne (Laneham says "upon a swimming mermaid"), figured in the show upon the lake, with the minstrel Arion, "upon his old friend the dolphin" (Laneham), singing "a delectable ditty"; and the fireworks furnished the shooting stars. The pageant attracted throngs of spectators from the country roundabout, and John Shakespeare, from his social and official position in Stratford, only thirteen miles from Kenilworth, would be likely to go there on this occasion; and perhaps he took the boy William, then eleven years old, with him. Whether William saw the pageant or not, he naturally heard all about it, and later read the descriptions of it by Laneham and Gascoigne, published in 1576; and when he was writing this early play, with its scenes in fairyland, he could hardly fail to recall the mythological features of the

Kenilworth show, and, since they were associated with Elizabeth, to introduce some of them into this passage wherein she is complimented.

In reading this play, this "lofty and lovely expression of a most luxuriant and happy poetic fancy," we cannot but indorse the tribute that a sympathetic critic[1] pays to "its exquisite purity of spirit, its affluence of invention, its extraordinary wealth of contrasted characters, its absolute symmetry of form, and its great beauty of poetic diction. The essential, wholesome cleanliness and sweetness of Shakespeare's mind, unaffected by the gross animalism of his times, appear conspicuously in this play. The atmosphere is free and bracing, the tone honest, the note true. The strands of action are braided with astonishing grace. The fourfold story is never allowed to lapse into dulness or obscurity. The dream-spirit is maintained throughout, and perhaps it is for this reason — that the poet was living and thinking and writing in the free, untrammeled world of his own spacious and airy imagination, and not in any definite sphere of the earth — that *A Midsummer-Night's Dream* is so radically superior to the other comedies written by himself at this period."

[1] Mr. William Winter.

A MIDSUMMER-NIGHT'S DREAM

DRAMATIS PERSONÆ

THESEUS, Duke of Athens.
EGEUS, Father to Hermia.
LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, } in love with Hermia.
PHILOSTRATE, master of the revels to Theseus.
QUINCE, a carpenter.
SNUG, a joiner.
BOTTOM, a weaver.
FLUTE, a bellows-mender.
SNOUT, a tinker.
STARVELING, a tailor.

HIPPOLYTA, queen of the Amazons, betrothed to Theseus.

HERMIA, daughter to Egeus, in love with Lysander.
HELENA, in love with Demetrius.

OBERON, king of the fairies.
TITANIA, queen of the fairies.
PUCK, or Robin Goodfellow.
PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH, MUSTARDSEED, } fairies.
Other fairies attending their King and Queen.
Attendants on Theseus and Hippolyta.

SCENE: *Athens, and a wood near it*

"I WILL ROAR," ETC. (*Scene 2*)

ACT I

SCENE I. *Athens. The Palace of Theseus*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, *and* Attendants

Theseus. Now, fair Hippolyta, our nuptial hour
Draws on apace; four happy days bring in
Another moon; but, O, methinks, how slow
This old moon wanes! She lingers my desires,
Like to a step-dame or a dowager
Long withering out a young man's revenue.

Hippolyta. Four days will quickly steep themselves in night,
Four nights will quickly dream away the time;
And then the moon, like to a silver bow

New-bent in heaven, shall behold the night
Of our solemnities.

Theseus. Go, Philostrate,
Stir up the Athenian youth to merriments;
Awake the pert and nimble spirit of mirth.
Turn melancholy forth to funerals;
The pale companion is not for our pomp.—

[*Exit Philostrate.*

Hippolyta, I woo'd thee with my sword,
And won thy love doing thee injuries;
But I will wed thee in another key,
With pomp, with triumph, and with revelling.

Enter EGEUS, HERMIA, LYSANDER, *and* DEMETRIUS

Egeus. Happy be Theseus, our renowned duke!

Theseus. Thanks, good Egeus; what 's the news with thee?

Egeus. Full of vexation come I, with complaint
Against my child, my daughter Hermia. —
Stand forth, Demetrius. — My noble lord,
This man hath my consent to marry her. —
Stand forth, Lysander; — and, my gracious duke,
This man hath bewitch'd the bosom of my child. —
Thou, thou, Lysander, thou hast given her rhymes
And interchang'd love-tokens with my child;
Thou hast by moonlight at her window sung
With feigning voice verses of feigning love,
And stolen the impression of her fantasy
With bracelets of thy hair, rings, gawds, conceits,

Knacks, trifles, nosegays, sweetmeats, messengers
Of strong prevailment in unharden'd youth.
With cunning hast thou filch'd my daughter's heart,
Turn'd her obedience, which is due to me,
To stubborn harshness; — and, my gracious duke,
Be it so she will not here before your grace
Consent to marry with Demetrius,
I beg the ancient privilege of Athens,
As she is mine, I may dispose of her,
Which shall be either to this gentleman
Or to her death, according to our law
Immediately provided in that case.

Theseus. What say you, Hermia? be advis'd, fair maid.
To you your father should be as a god;
One that compos'd your beauties, yea, and one
To whom you are but as a form in wax
By him imprinted and within his power
To leave the figure or disfigure it.
Demetrius is a worthy gentleman.

Hermia. So is Lysander.

Theseus. In himself he is;
But in this kind, wanting your father's voice,
The other must be held the worthier.

Hermia. I would my father look'd but with my eyes.

Theseus. Rather your eyes must with his judgment look.

Hermia. I do entreat your grace to pardon me.
I know not by what power I am made bold,

Nor how it may concern my modesty
In such a presence here to plead my thoughts;
But I beseech your grace that I may know
The worst that may befall me in this case,
If I refuse to wed Demetrius.

Theseus. Either to die the death or to abjure
For ever the society of men.
Therefore, fair Hermia, question your desires;
Know of your youth, examine well your blood,
Whether, if you yield not to your father's choice,
You can endure the livery of a nun,
For aye to be in shady cloister mew'd,
To live a barren sister all your life,
Chanting faint hymns to the cold fruitless moon.
Thrice blessed they that master so their blood
To undergo such maiden pilgrimage;
But earthlier happy is the rose distill'd
Than that which withering on the virgin thorn
Grows, lives, and dies in single blessedness.

Hermia. So will I grow, so live, so die, my lord,
Ere I will yield my virgin patent up
Unto his lordship whose unwished yoke
My soul consents not to give sovereignty.

Theseus. Take time to pause; and, by the next new moon —
The sealing-day betwixt my love and me
For everlasting bond of fellowship —
Upon that day either prepare to die
For disobedience to your father's will,

Or else to wed Demetrius, as he would,
Or on Diana's altar to protest
For aye austerity and single life.

Demetrius. Relent, sweet Hermia; — and, Lysander, yield
Thy crazed title to my certain right.

Lysander. You have her father's love, Demetrius,
Let me have Hermia's; do you marry him.

Egeus. Scornful Lysander! true, he hath my love,
And what is mine my love shall render him;
And she is mine, and all my right of her
I do estate unto Demetrius.

Lysander. I am, my lord, as well deriv'd as he,
As well possess'd; my love is more than his;
My fortunes every way as fairly rank'd,
If not with vantage, as Demetrius';
And, which is more than all these boasts can be,
I am belov'd of beauteous Hermia.
Why should not I then prosecute my right?
Demetrius, I 'll avouch it to his head,
Made love to Nedar's daughter, Helena,
And won her soul; and she, sweet lady, dotes,
Devoutly dotes, dotes in idolatry,
Upon this spotted and inconstant man.

Theseus. I must confess that I have heard so much,
And with Demetrius thought to have spoke thereof;
But, being over-full of self-affairs,
My mind did lose it. — But, Demetrius, come; —
And come, Egeus; — you shall go with me.

I have some private schooling for you both. —
For you, fair Hermia, look you arm yourself
To fit your fancies to your father's will;
Or else the law of Athens yields you up —
Which by no means we may extenuate —
To death or to a vow of single life. —
Come, my Hippolyta; what cheer, my love? —
Demetrius and Egeus, go along;
I must employ you in some business
Against our nuptial, and confer with you
Of something nearly that concerns yourselves.

Egeus. With duty and desire we follow you.

[*Exeunt all but Lysander and Hermia.*

Lysander. How now, my love! why is your cheek so pale?
How chance the roses there do fade so fast?

Hermia. Belike for want of rain, which I could well
Beteem them from the tempest of my eyes.

Lysander. Ay me! for aught that I could ever read,
Could ever hear by tale or history,
The course of true love never did run smooth;
But, either it was different in blood, —

Hermia. O cross! too high to be enthrall'd to low.

Lysander. Or else misgraffed in respect of years, —

Hermia. O spite! too old to be engag'd to young.

Lysander. Or else it stood upon the choice of friends, —

Hermia. O hell! to choose love by another's eyes.

Lysander. Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,

War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it,
Making it momentany as a sound,
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream;
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and earth,
And ere a man hath power to say 'Behold!'
The jaws of darkness do devour it up;
So quick bright things come to confusion.

Hermia. If then true lovers have been ever cross'd,
It stands as an edict in destiny;
Then let us teach our trial patience,
Because it is a customary cross,
As due to love as thoughts and dreams and sighs,
Wishes and tears, poor fancy's followers.

Lysander. A good persuasion; therefore, hear me, Hermia.
I have a widow aunt, a dowager
Of great revenue, and she hath no child.
From Athens is her house remote seven leagues;
And she respects me as her only son.
There, gentle Hermia, may I marry thee;
And to that place the sharp Athenian law
Cannot pursue us. If thou lov'st me then,
Steal forth thy father's house to-morrow night;
And in the wood, a league without the town,
Where I did meet thee once with Helena,
To do observance to a morn of May,
There will I stay for thee.

Hermia. My good Lysander!

I swear to thee, by Cupid's strongest bow,
By his best arrow with the golden head,
By the simplicity of Venus' doves,
By that which knitteth souls and prospers loves,
And by that fire which burn'd the Carthage queen
When the false Troyan under sail was seen,
By all the vows that ever men have broke,
In number more than ever women spoke,
In that same place thou hast appointed me,
To-morrow truly will I meet with thee.

Lysander. Keep promise, love. Look, here comes Helena.

Enter HELENA

Hermia. God speed fair Helena! whither away?

Helena. Call you me fair? that fair again unsay.
Demetrius loves your fair — O happy fair!
Your eyes are lode-stars, and your tongue's sweet air
More tuneable than lark to shepherd's ear,
When wheat is green, when hawthorn buds appear.
Sickness is catching; O, were favour so,
Yours would I catch, fair Hermia, ere I go.
My ear should catch your voice, my eye your eye,
My tongue should catch your tongue's sweet melody.
Were the world mine, Demetrius being bated,
The rest I 'd give to be to you translated.
O, teach me how you look, and with what art
You sway the motion of Demetrius' heart.

Hermia. I frown upon him, yet he loves me still.

Helena. O that your frowns would teach my smiles such skill!

Hermia. I give him curses, yet he gives me love.

Helena. O that my prayers could such affection move!

Hermia. The more I hate, the more he follows me.

Helena. The more I love, the more he hateth me.

Hermia. His folly, Helena, is no fault of mine.

Helena. None, but your beauty; would that fault were mine!

Hermia. Take comfort; he no more shall see my face,
Lysander and myself will fly this place.
Before the time I did Lysander see,
Seem'd Athens like a paradise to me.
O, then, what graces in my love do dwell
That he hath turn'd a heaven into a hell!

Lysander. Helen, to you our minds we will unfold:
To-morrow night, when Phœbe doth behold
Her silver visage in the watery glass,
Decking with liquid pearl the bladed grass,
A time that lovers' flights doth still conceal,
Through Athens' gates have we devis'd to steal.

Hermia. And in the wood, where often you and I
Upon faint primrose-beds were wont to lie,
Emptying our bosoms of their counsel sweet,
There my Lysander and myself shall meet,
And thence from Athens turn away our eyes

To seek new friends and stranger companies.
Farewell, sweet playfellow; pray thou for us,
And good luck grant thee thy Demetrius! —
Keep word, Lysander; we must starve our sight
From lovers' food till morrow deep midnight.

Lysander. I will, my Hermia. — [*Exit Hermia.*
Helena, adieu:
As you on him, Demetrius dote on you! [*Exit.*

Helena. How happy some o'er other some can be!
Through Athens I am thought as fair as she;
But what of that? Demetrius thinks not so;
He will not know what all but he do know;
And as he errs, doting on Hermia's eyes,
So I, admiring of his qualities.
Things base and vile, holding no quantity,
Love can transpose to form and dignity.
Love looks not with the eyes, but with the mind,
And therefore is wing'd Cupid painted blind.
Nor hath Love's mind of any judgment taste;
Wings and no eyes figure unheedy haste,
And therefore is Love said to be a child,
Because in choice he is so oft beguil'd.
As waggish boys in game themselves forswear,
So the boy Love is perjur'd every where;
For ere Demetrius look'd on Hermia's eyne,
He hail'd down oaths that he was only mine;
And when this hail some heat from Hermia felt,
So he dissolv'd, and showers of oaths did melt.
I will go tell him of fair Hermia's flight;

Then to the wood will he to-morrow night
Pursue her, and for this intelligence
If I have thanks, it is a dear expense;
But herein mean I to enrich my pain,
To have his sight thither and back again. [*Exit.*

Scene II. *Athens. Quince's House*

Enter Quince, Snug, Bottom, Flute, Snout, *and* Starveling

Quince. Is all our company here?

Bottom. You were best to call them generally, man by man, according to the scrip.

Quince. Here is the scroll of every man's name which is thought fit, through all Athens, to play in our interlude before the duke and the duchess, on his wedding-day at night.

Bottom. First, good Peter Quince, say what the play treats on, then read the names of the actors, and so grow to a point.

Quince. Marry, our play is, The most lamentable Comedy, and most cruel Death of Pyramus and Thisby.

Bottom. A very good piece of work, I assure you, and a merry. Now, good Peter Quince, call forth your actors by the scroll. — Masters, spread yourselves.

Quince. Answer as I call you. — Nick Bottom, the weaver.

Bottom. Ready. Name what part I am for, and proceed.

Quince. You, Nick Bottom, are set down for Pyramus.

Bottom. What is Pyramus? a lover, or a tyrant?

Quince. A lover, that kills himself most gallant for love.

Bottom. That will ask some tears in the true performing of it. If I do it, let the audience look to their eyes; I will move storms, I will condole in some measure. To the rest. — Yet my chief humour is for a tyrant; I could play Ercles rarely, or a part to tear a cat in, to make all split.

The raging rocks
And shivering shocks
Shall break the locks
Of prison gates;
And Phibbus' car
Shall shine from far,
And make and mar
The foolish Fates.

This was lofty! — Now name the rest of the players. — This is Ercles' vein, a tyrant's vein; a lover is more condoling.

Quince. Francis Flute, the bellows-mender.

Flute. Here, Peter Quince.

Quince. Flute, you must take Thisby on you.

Flute. What is Thisby? a wandering knight?

Quince. It is the lady that Pyramus must love.

Flute. Nay, faith, let not me play a woman; I have a beard coming.

Quince. That 's all one; you shall play it in a mask, and you may speak as small as you will.

Bottom. An I may hide my face, let me play Thisby too. I 'll speak in a monstrous little voice: 'Thisne, Thisne, — Ah Pyramus, my lover dear! thy Thisby dear, and lady dear!'

Quince. No, no; you must play Pyramus; — and, Flute, you Thisby.

Bottom. Well, proceed.

Quince. Robin Starveling, the tailor.

Starveling. Here, Peter Quince.

Quince. Robin Starveling, you must play Thisby's mother. — Tom Snout, the tinker.

Snout. Here, Peter Quince.

Quince. You, Pyramus' father; myself, Thisby's father. — Snug, the joiner; you, the lion's part; — and I hope, here is a play fitted.

Snug. Have you the lion's part written? pray you, if it be, give it me, for I am slow of study.

Quince. You may do it extempore, for it is nothing but roaring.

Bottom. Let me play the lion too. I will roar, that I will do any man's heart good to hear me; I will roar, that I will make the duke say, 'Let him roar again, let him roar again.'

Quince. An you should do it too terribly, you would fright the duchess and the ladies, that they would shriek; and that were enough to hang us all.

All. That would hang us, every mother's son.

Bottom. I grant you, friends, if that you should fright the ladies out of their wits, they would have no

more discretion but to hang us; but I will aggravate my voice so that I will roar you as gently as any sucking dove, I will roar you an 't were any nightingale.

Quince. You can play no part but Pyramus; for Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely gentleman-like man; therefore you must needs play Pyramus.

Bottom. Well, I will undertake it. What beard were I best to play it in?

Quince. Why, what you will.

Bottom. I will discharge it in either your straw-colour beard, your orange-tawny beard, your purple-in-grain beard, or your French-crown-colour beard, your perfect yellow.

Quince. Some of your French crowns have no hair at all, and then you will play barefaced. — But, masters, here are your parts; and I am to entreat you, request you, and desire you, to con them by to-morrow night; and meet me in the palace wood, a mile without the town, by moonlight. There will we rehearse; for if we meet in the city, we shall be dogged with company and our devices known. In the meantime I will draw a bill of properties, such as our play wants. I pray you, fail me not.

Bottom. We will meet; and there we may rehearse most obscenely and courageously. Take pains; be perfect; adieu.

Quince. At the duke's oak we meet.

Bottom. Enough; hold or cut bow-strings. [*Exeunt.*

CHORAGUS INSTRUCTING ACTORS

ACT II

SCENE I. *A Wood near Athens*

Enter, from opposite sides, a Fairy *and* PUCK

Puck. How now, spirit! whither wander you?
Fairy. Over hill, over dale,
Thorough bush, thorough brier,
Over park, over pale,
Thorough flood, thorough fire,
I do wander every where,
Swifter than the moon's sphere;
And I serve the fairy queen,
To dew her orbs upon the green.

The cowslips tall her pensioners be.
In their gold coats spots you see;
Those be rubies, fairy favours,
In those freckles live their savours.
I must go seek some dewdrops here,
And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear.
Farewell, thou lob of spirits, I 'll be gone;
Our queen and all her elves come here anon.

Puck. The king doth keep his revels here to-night.
Take heed the queen come not within his sight;
For Oberon is passing fell and wrath,
Because that she as her attendant hath
A lovely boy, stolen from an Indian king.
She never had so sweet a changeling;
And jealous Oberon would have the child
Knight of his train, to trace the forests wild,
But she perforce withholds the loved boy,
Crowns him with flowers and makes him all her joy;
And now they never meet in grove or green,
By fountain clear, or spangled starlight sheen,
But they do square, that all their elves for fear
Creep into acorn-cups and hide them there.

Fairy. Either I mistake your shape and making quite,
Or else you are that shrewd and knavish sprite
Call'd Robin Goodfellow. Are not you he
That frights the maidens of the villagery;
Skim milk, and sometimes labour in the quern,
And bootless make the breathless housewife churn;
And sometime make the drink to bear no barm;

Mislead night-wanderers, laughing at their harm?
Those that Hobgoblin call you and sweet Puck,
You do their work and they shall have good luck.
Are not you he?

Puck. Thou speak'st aright;
I am that merry wanderer of the night.
I jest to Oberon, and make him smile
When I a fat and bean-fed horse beguile,
Neighing in likeness of a filly foal;
And sometime lurk I in a gossip's bowl,
In very likeness of a roasted crab,
And when she drinks, against her lips I bob
And on her wither'd dewlap pour the ale.
The wisest aunt, telling the saddest tale,
Sometime for three-foot stool mistaketh me;
Then slip I from her bum, down topples she,
And 'tailor' cries, and falls into a cough;
And then the whole quire hold their hips and laugh,
And waxen in their mirth, and neeze, and swear
A merrier hour was never wasted there.
But, room, fairy! here comes Oberon.

Fairy. And here my mistress. Would that he were gone!

Enter, from one side, OBERON, *with his train; from the other,* TITANIA *with hers*

Oberon. Ill met by moonlight, proud Titania.

Titania. What, jealous Oberon! Fairies, skip hence;
I have forsworn his bed and company.

Oberon. Tarry, rash wanton; am not I thy lord?
Titania. Then I must be thy lady; but I know
When thou hast stolen away from fairy land,
And in the shape of Corin sat all day,
Playing on pipes of corn and versing love
To amorous Phillida. Why art thou here,
Come from the farthest steep of India,
But that, forsooth, the bouncing Amazon,
Your buskin'd mistress and your warrior love,
To Theseus must be wedded, and you come
To give their bed joy and prosperity?
Oberon. How canst thou thus for shame, Titania,
Glance at my credit with Hippolyta,
Knowing I know thy love to Theseus?
Didst thou not lead him through the glimmering night
From Perigenia, whom he ravished?
And make him with fair Ægle break his faith,
With Ariadne and Antiopa?
Titania. These are the forgeries of jealousy;
And never, since the middle summer's spring,
Met we on hill, in dale, forest or mead,
By paved fountain or by rushy brook,
Or in the beached margent of the sea,
To dance our ringlets to the whistling wind,
But with thy brawls thou hast disturb'd our sport.
Therefore the winds, piping to us in vain,
As in revenge, have suck'd up from the sea
Contagious fogs, which falling in the land
Hath every petty river made so proud

That they have overborne their continents.
The ox hath therefore stretch'd his yoke in vain,
The ploughman lost his sweat, and the green corn
Hath rotted ere his youth attain'd a beard;
The fold stands empty in the drowned field,
And crows are fatted with the murrain flock;
The nine men's morris is fill'd up with mud,
And the quaint mazes in the wanton green
For lack of tread are undistinguishable.
The human mortals want their winter here;
No night is now with hymn or carol blest.
Therefore the moon, the governess of floods,
Pale in her anger, washes all the air,
That rheumatic diseases do abound.
And thorough this distemperature we see
The seasons alter: hoary-headed frosts
Fall in the fresh lap of the crimson rose,
And on old Hiems' thin and icy crown
An odorous chaplet of sweet summer buds
Is, as in mockery, set; the spring, the summer,
The childing autumn, angry winter, change
Their wonted liveries, and the mazed world,
By their increase, now knows not which is which.
And this same progeny of evils comes
From our debate, from our dissension;
We are their parents and original.

Oberon. Do you amend it then; it lies in you.
Why should Titania cross her Oberon?
I do but beg a little changeling boy,

To be my henchman.

Titania. Set your heart at rest;
The fairy land buys not the child of me.
His mother was a votaress of my order;
And, in the spiced Indian air by night,
Full often hath she gossip'd by my side,
And sat with me on Neptune's yellow sands,
Marking the embarked traders on the flood,
Which she with pretty and with swimming gait
Would imitate, and sail upon the land,
To fetch me trifles and return again,
As from a voyage, rich with merchandise.
But she, being mortal, of that boy did die;
And for her sake do I rear up her boy,
And for her sake I will not part with him.

Oberon. How long within this wood intend you stay?

Titania. Perchance till after Theseus' wedding-day.
If you will patiently dance in our round
And see our moonlight revels, go with us;
If not, shun me, and I will spare your haunts.

Oberon. Give me that boy, and I will go with thee.

Titania. Not for thy fairy kingdom. — Fairies, away!
We shall chide downright, if I longer stay.

[*Exit Titania with her train.*

Oberon. Well, go thy way; thou shalt not from this grove

Till I torment thee for this injury. —
My gentle Puck, come hither. Thou rememberest
Since once I sat upon a promontory,
And heard a mermaid on a dolphin's back
Uttering such dulcet and harmonious breath
That the rude sea grew civil at her song,
And certain stars shot madly from their spheres
To hear the sea-maid's music.

Puck. I remember.

Oberon. That very time I saw, but thou couldst not,
Flying between the cold moon and the earth,
Cupid all arm'd. A certain aim he took
At a fair vestal throned by the west,
And loos'd his love-shaft smartly from his bow,
As it should pierce a hundred thousand hearts;
But I might see young Cupid's fiery shaft
Quench'd in the chaste beams of the watery moon,
And the imperial votaress passed on,
In maiden meditation, fancy-free.
Yet mark'd I where the bolt of Cupid fell;
It fell upon a little western flower,
Before milk-white, now purple with love's wound,
And maidens call it love-in-idleness.
Fetch me that flower; the herb I show'd thee once.
The juice of it on sleeping eyelids laid
Will make or man or woman madly dote
Upon the next live creature that it sees.
Fetch me this herb, and be thou here again
Ere the leviathan can swim a league.

Puck. I 'll put a girdle round about the earth
In forty minutes. [*Exit.*

Oberon. Having once this juice,
I 'll watch Titania when she is asleep,
And drop the liquor of it in her eyes.
The next thing then she waking looks upon,
Be it on lion, bear, or wolf, or bull,
On meddling monkey, or on busy ape,
She shall pursue it with the soul of love;
And ere I take this charm from off her sight,
As I can take it with another herb,
I 'll make her render up her page to me.
But who comes here? I am invisible,
And I will overhear their conference.

Enter DEMETRIUS, HELENA *following him*

Demetrius. I love thee not, therefore pursue me not.
Where is Lysander and fair Hermia?
The one I 'll slay, the other slayeth me.
Thou told'st me they were stolen unto this wood;
And here am I, and wode within this wood,
Because I cannot meet my Hermia.
Hence, get thee gone, and follow me no more.

Helena. You draw me, you hard-hearted adamant,
But yet you draw not iron, for my heart
Is true as steel; leave you your power to draw,
And I shall have no power to follow you.

Demetrius. Do I entice you? do I speak you fair?

Or, rather, do I not in plainest truth
Tell you I do not nor I cannot love you?
Helena. And even for that do I love you the more.
I am your spaniel; and, Demetrius,
The more you beat me I will fawn on you.
Use me but as your spaniel, spurn me, strike me,
Neglect me, lose me; only give me leave,
Unworthy as I am, to follow you.
What worser place can I beg in your love, —
And yet a place of high respect with me, —
Than to be used as you use your dog?
Demetrius. Tempt not too much the hatred of my spirit,
For I am sick when I do look on thee.
Helena. And I am sick when I look not on you.
Demetrius. You do impeach your modesty too much,
To leave the city and commit yourself
Into the hands of one that loves you not,
To trust the opportunity of night
And the ill counsel of a desert place
With the rich worth of your virginity.
Helena. Your virtue is my privilege for that.
It is not night when I do see your face,
Therefore I think I am not in the night;
Nor doth this wood lack worlds of company,
For you in my respect are all the world.
Then how can it be said I am alone,
When all the world is here to look on me?

Demetrius. I 'll run from thee and hide me in the brakes,
And leave thee to the mercy of wild beasts.
Helena. The wildest hath not such a heart as you.
Run when you will, the story shall be chang'd:
Apollo flies and Daphne holds the chase;
The dove pursues the griffin; the mild hind
Makes speed to catch the tiger; bootless speed,
When cowardice pursues and valour flies.
Demetrius. I will not stay thy questions, let me go;
Or, if thou follow me, do not believe
But I shall do thee mischief in the wood.
Helena. Ay, in the temple, in the town, the field,
You do me mischief. Fie, Demetrius!
Your wrongs do set a scandal on my sex.
We cannot fight for love, as men may do;
We should be woo'd, and were not made to woo.
[*Exit Demetrius.*
I 'll follow thee and make a heaven of hell,
To die upon the hand I love so well. [*Exit.*
Oberon. Fare thee well, nymph; ere he do leave this grove,
Thou shalt fly him, and he shall seek thy love. —

Enter Puck

Hast thou the flower there? Welcome, wanderer.
Puck. Ay, there it is.
Oberon. I pray thee, give it me.
I know a bank where the wild thyme blows,

Where oxlips and the nodding violet grows,
Quite over-canopied with luscious woodbine,
With sweet musk-roses and with eglantine.
There sleeps Titania sometime of the night,
Lull'd in these flowers with dances and delight,
And there the snake throws her enamell'd skin,
Weed wide enough to wrap a fairy in;
And with the juice of this I 'll streak her eyes,
And make her full of hateful fantasies.
Take thou some of it, and seek through this grove;
A sweet Athenian lady is in love
With a disdainful youth. Anoint his eyes;
But do it when the next thing he espies
May be the lady. Thou shalt know the man
By the Athenian garments he hath on.
Effect it with some care, that he may prove
More fond on her than she upon her love;
And look thou meet me ere the first cock crow.

Puck. Fear not, my lord, your servant shall do so.

[*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Another Part of the Wood*

Enter Titania, *with her train*

Titania. Come, now a roundel and a fairy song;
Then, for the third part of a minute, hence;
Some to kill cankers in the musk-rose buds,
Some war with rere-mice for their leathern wings,
To make my small elves coats, and some keep back

The clamorous owl that nightly hoots and wonders
At our quaint spirits. Sing me now asleep;
Then to your offices and let me rest.

SONG

1 Fairy. *You spotted snakes with double tongue,*
Thorny hedgehogs, be not seen;
Newts and blind-worms, do no wrong,
Come not near our fairy queen.

Chorus. *Philomel, with melody*
Sing in our sweet lullaby;
Lulla, lulla, lullaby, lulla, lulla, lullaby.
Never harm,
Nor spell nor charm,
Come our lovely lady nigh!
So, good night, with lullaby.

2 Fairy. *Weaving spiders, come not here;*
Hence, you long-legg'd spinners, hence!
Beetles black, approach not near;
Worm nor snail, do no offence.

Chorus. *Philomel, with melody*, etc.

1 *Fairy.* Hence, away! now all is well;
One aloof stand sentinel.

[*Exeunt Fairies. Titania sleeps.*

Enter OBERON, *and squeezes the flower on Titania's eyelids*

Oberon. What thou seest when thou dost wake,
Do it for thy true-love take;

Love and languish for his sake.
Be it ounce, or cat, or bear,
Pard, or boar with bristled hair,
In thy eye that shall appear
When thou wak'st, it is thy dear;
Wake when some vile thing is near.

[*Exit.*

Enter LYSANDER *and* HERMIA

Lysander. Fair love, you faint with wandering in the wood;
And to speak troth, I have forgot our way.
We 'll rest us, Hermia, if you think it good,
And tarry for the comfort of the day.

Hermia. Be it so, Lysander; find you out a bed,
For I upon this bank will rest my head.

Lysander. One turf shall serve as pillow for us both;
One heart, one bed, two bosoms and one troth.

Hermia. Nay, good Lysander; for my sake, my dear,
Lie further off yet, do not lie so near.

Lysander. O, take the sense, sweet, of my innocence!
Love takes the meaning in love's conference.
I mean, that my heart unto yours is knit
So that but one heart we can make of it;
Two bosoms interchained with an oath;
So then two bosoms and a single troth.
Then by your side no bed-room me deny;
For lying so, Hermia, I do not lie.

Hermia. Lysander riddles very prettily;

Now much beshrew my manners and my pride
If Hermia meant to say Lysander lied.
But, gentle friend, for love and courtesy
Lie further off; in human modesty,
Such separation as may well be said
Becomes a virtuous bachelor and a maid,
So far be distant; and, good night, sweet friend.
Thy love ne'er alter till thy sweet life end!

Lysander. Amen, amen, to that fair prayer, say I;
And then end life when I end loyalty!
Here is my bed; sleep give thee all his rest!

Hermia. With half that wish the wisher's eyes be press'd! [*They sleep.*

Enter PUCK

Puck. Through the forest have I gone,
But Athenian found I none
On whose eyes I might approve
This flower's force in stirring love.
Night and silence. — Who is here?
Weeds of Athens he doth wear.
This is he, my master said,
Despised the Athenian maid;
And here the maiden, sleeping sound,
On the dank and dirty ground.
Pretty soul! she durst not lie
Near this lack-love, this kill-courtesy. —
Churl, upon thy eyes I throw
All the power this charm doth owe.

When thou wak'st, let love forbid
Sleep his seat on thy eyelid!
So awake when I am gone;
For I must now to Oberon. [*Exit.*

Enter DEMETRIUS *and* HELENA, *running*

Helena. Stay, though thou kill me, sweet Demetrius.

Demetrius. I charge thee, hence, and do not haunt me thus.

Helena. O, wilt thou darkling leave me? do not so.

Demetrius. Stay, on thy peril; I alone will go.

[*Exit.*

Helena. O, I am out of breath in this fond chase!
The more my prayer, the lesser is my grace.
Happy is Hermia, wheresoe'er she lies;
For she hath blessed and attractive eyes.
How came her eyes so bright? Not with salt tears;
If so, my eyes are oftener wash'd than hers.
No, no, I am as ugly as a bear,
For beasts that meet me run away for fear;
Therefore no marvel though Demetrius
Do, as a monster, fly my presence thus.
What wicked and dissembling glass of mine
Made me compare with Hermia's sphery eyne? —
But who is here? Lysander! on the ground!
Dead? or asleep? I see no blood, no wound. —
Lysander, if you live, good sir, awake.

Lysander. [*Awaking.*] And run through fire I will for thy sweet sake.

Transparent Helena! Nature shows art,
That through thy bosom makes me see thy heart.
Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
Is that vile name to perish on my sword!

Helena. Do not say so, Lysander; say not so.
What though he love your Hermia? Lord, what though?
Yet Hermia still loves you; then be content.

Lysander. Content with Hermia! No; I do repent
The tedious minutes I with her have spent.
Not Hermia but Helena I love;
Who will not change a raven for a dove?
The will of man is by his reason sway'd,
And reason says you are the worthier maid.
Things growing are not ripe until their season;
So I, being young, till now ripe not to reason,
And touching now the point of human skill,
Reason becomes the marshal to my will
And leads me to your eyes, where I o'erlook
Love's stories written in love's richest book.

Helena. Wherefore was I to this keen mockery born?
When at your hands did I deserve this scorn?
Is 't not enough, is 't not enough, young man,
That I did never, no, nor never can,
Deserve a sweet look from Demetrius' eye,
But you must flout my insufficiency?
Good troth, you do me wrong, good sooth, you do,

In such disdainful manner me to woo.
But fare you well; perforce I must confess
I thought you lord of more true gentleness.
O, that a lady, of one man refus'd,
Should of another therefore be abus'd! [*Exit.*

Lysander. She sees not Hermia.—Hermia, sleep thou there;
And never mayst thou come Lysander near!
For as a surfeit of the sweetest things
The deepest loathing to the stomach brings,
Or as the heresies that men do leave
Are hated most of those they did deceive,
So thou, my surfeit and my heresy,
Of all be hated, but the most of me!
And, all my powers, address your love and might
To honour Helen and to be her knight! [*Exit.*

Hermia. [*Awaking.*] Help me, Lysander, help me! do thy best
To pluck this crawling serpent from my breast!—
Ay me, for pity! what a dream was here!
Lysander, look how I do quake with fear:
Methought a serpent eat my heart away,
And you sat smiling at his cruel prey.
Lysander! what, remov'd? Lysander! lord!
What, out of hearing? gone? no sound, no word?
Alack, where are you? speak, an if you hear;
Speak, of all loves! I swoon almost with fear.
No? then I well perceive you are not nigh;
Either death or you I 'll find immediately. [*Exit.*

PUCK AND LYSANDER

ACT III.

SCENE I. *The Wood. Titania lying asleep*

Enter QUINCE, SNUG, BOTTOM, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING

Bottom. Are we all met?

Quince. Pat, pat; and here 's a marvellous convenient place for our rehearsal. This green plot shall be our stage, this hawthorn-brake our tiring-house; and we will do it in action as we will do it before the duke.

Bottom. Peter Quince, —

Quince. What sayest thou, bully Bottom?

Bottom. There are things in this comedy of Pyramus and Thisby that will never please. First, Pyramus must draw a sword to kill himself, which the ladies cannot abide. How answer you that?

Snout. By'r lakin, a parlous fear.

Starveling. I believe we must leave the killing out, when all is done.

Bottom. Not a whit; I have a device to make all well. Write me a prologue; and let the prologue seem to say, we will do no harm with our swords, and that Pyramus is not killed indeed; and, for the more better assurance, tell them that I Pyramus am not Pyramus, but Bottom the weaver. This will put them out of fear.

Quince. Well, we will have such a prologue; and it shall be written in eight and six.

Bottom. No, make it two more; let it be written in eight and eight.

Snout. Will not the ladies be afeard of the lion?

Starveling. I fear it, I promise you.

Bottom. Masters, you ought to consider with yourselves: to bring in — God shield us! — a lion among ladies is a most dreadful thing, for there is not a more fearful wild-fowl than your lion living; and we ought to look to 't.

Snout. Therefore another prologue must tell he is not a lion.

Bottom. Nay, you must name his name, and half his face must be seen through the lion's neck; and he

himself must speak through, saying thus, or to the same defect, — 'Ladies,' — or 'Fair ladies, — I would wish you,' — or 'I would request you,' — or 'I would entreat you, — not to fear, not to tremble: my life for yours. If you think I come hither as a lion, it were pity of my life; no, I am no such thing, I am a man as other men are;' and there indeed let him name his name, and tell them plainly he is Snug the joiner.

Quince. Well, it shall be so. But there is two hard things; that is, to bring the moonlight into a chamber, for, you know, Pyramus and Thisby meet by moonlight.

Snout. Doth the moon shine that night we play our play?

Bottom. A calendar, a calendar! look in the almanac; find out moonshine, find out moonshine.

Quince. Yes, it doth shine that night.

Bottom. Why, then may you leave a casement of the great chamber window, where we play, open, and the moon may shine in at the casement.

Quince. Ay; or else one must come in with a bush of thorns and a lanthorn, and say he comes to disfigure, or to present, the person of Moonshine. Then, there is another thing; we must have a wall in the great chamber, for Pyramus and Thisby, says the story, did talk through the chink of a wall.

Snout. You can never bring in a wall. — What say you, Bottom?

Bottom. Some man or other must present Wall; and let him have some plaster, or some loam, or some rough-cast about him, to signify wall; and let him hold his fingers thus, and through that cranny shall Pyramus and Thisby whisper.

Quince. If that may be, then all is well. Come, sit down, every mother's son, and rehearse your parts. — Pyramus, you begin. When you have spoken your speech, enter into that brake; and so every one according to his cue.

Enter PUCK *behind*

Puck. What hempen home-spuns have we swaggering here,
So near the cradle of the fairy queen?
What, a play toward? I 'll be an auditor;
An actor too perhaps, if I see cause.

Quince. Speak, Pyramus. — Thisby, stand forth.

Bottom. Thisby, the flowers of odious savours sweet, —

Quince. Odours, odours.

Bottom. —— odours savours sweet;
So hath thy breath, my dearest Thisby dear.
But hark, a voice! stay thou but here awhile,
And by and by I will to thee appear. [*Exit.*

Puck. A stranger Pyramus than e'er play'd here! [*Exit.*

Flute. Must I speak now?

Quince. Ay, marry, must you; for you must understand he goes but to see a noise that he heard, and is to come again.

Flute. Most radiant Pyramus, most lily-white of hue,
Of colour like the red rose on triumphant briar,
Most brisky juvenal and eke most lovely Jew,
As true as truest horse that yet would never tire,
I'll meet thee, Pyramus, at Ninny's tomb.

Quince. 'Ninus' tomb,' man. Why, you must not speak that yet; that you answer to Pyramus. You speak all your part at once, cues and all. — Pyramus, enter; your cue is past; it is, 'never tire.'

Flute. O, — As true as truest horse that yet would never tire.

Enter PUCK, *and* BOTTOM *with an ass's head*

Bottom. If I were fair, Thisby, I were only thine. —

Quince. O monstrous! O strange! we are haunted. Pray, masters! fly, masters! Help!

[*Exeunt Quince, Snug, Flute, Snout, and Starveling.*

Puck. I'll follow you, I'll lead you about a round,
Through bog, through bush, through brake, through brier;
Sometime a horse I'll be, sometime a hound,
A hog, a headless bear, sometime a fire,
And neigh, and bark, and grunt, and roar, and burn,
Like horse, hound, hog, bear, fire, at every turn. [*Exit.*

Bottom. Why do they run away? this is a knavery of them to make me afeard.

Re-enter SNOUT

Snout. O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?

Bottom. What do you see? you see an ass-head of your own, do you? [*Exit Snout.*

Re-enter QUINCE

Quince. Bless thee, Bottom! bless thee! thou art translated. [*Exit.*

Bottom. I see their knavery; this is to make an ass of me, to fright me, if they could. But I will not stir from this place, do what they can; I will walk up and down here, and I will sing, that they shall hear I am not afraid. [*Sings.*

The ousel cock so black of hue,
With orange-tawny bill,
The throstle with his note so true,
The wren with little quill,—

Titania. [*Awaking.*] What angel wakes me from my flowery bed?

Bottom. [Sings]

The finch, the sparrow, and the lark,
The plain-song cuckoo gray,
Whose note full many a man doth mark,
And dares not answer nay;—

for, indeed, who would set his wit to so foolish a bird? who would give a bird the lie, though he cry 'cuckoo' never so?

Titania. I pray thee, gentle mortal, sing again.
Mine ear is much enamour'd of thy note;
So is mine eye enthralled to thy shape,
And thy fair virtue's force perforce doth move me
On the first view to say, to swear, I love thee.

Bottom. Methinks, mistress, you should have little reason for that; and yet, to say the truth, reason and love keep little company together now-a-days; the more the pity that some honest neighbours will not make them friends. Nay, I can gleek upon occasion.

Titania. Thou art as wise as thou art beautiful.

Bottom. Not so, neither; but if I had wit enough to get out of this wood, I have enough to serve mine own turn.

Titania. Out of this wood do not desire to go;
Thou shalt remain here, whether thou wilt or no.
I am a spirit of no common rate.
The summer still doth tend upon my state;
And I do love thee; therefore, go with me.
I 'll give thee fairies to attend on thee,
And they shall fetch thee jewels from the deep,
And sing while thou on pressed flowers dost sleep;
And I will purge thy mortal grossness so
That thou shalt like an airy spirit go. —
Peaseblossom! — Cobweb! — Moth! — and Mustard-seed!

Enter PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH, *and* MUSTARDSEED

Peaseblossom. Ready.
Cobweb. And I.
Moth. And I.
Mustardseed. And I.
All. Where shall we go?

Titania. Be kind and courteous to this gentleman;

Hop in his walks, and gambol in his eyes;
Feed him with apricocks and dewberries,
With purple grapes, green figs, and mulberries.
The honey-bags steal from the humble-bees,
And for night-tapers crop their waxen thighs,
And light them at the fiery glow-worm's eyes,
To have my love to bed and to arise;
And pluck the wings from painted butterflies
To fan the moonbeams from his sleeping eyes.
Nod to him, elves, and do him courtesies.

Peaseblossom. Hail, mortal!

Cobweb. Hail!

Moth. Hail!

Mustardseed. Hail!

Bottom. I cry your worships mercy, heartily. — I beseech your worship's name.

Cobweb. Cobweb.

Bottom. I shall desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Cobweb; if I cut my finger, I shall make bold with you. — Your name, honest gentleman?

Peaseblossom. Peaseblossom.

Bottom. I pray you, commend me to Mistress Squash, your mother, and to Master Peascod, your father. Good Master Peaseblossom, I shall desire you of more acquaintance too. — Your name, I beseech you, sir?

Mustardseed. Mustardseed.

Bottom. Good Master Mustardseed, I know your patience well; that same cowardly, giant-like ox-beef

hath devoured many a gentleman of your house. I promise you, your kindred hath made my eyes water ere now. I desire you of more acquaintance, good Master Mustardseed.

Titania. Come, wait upon him; lead him to my bower.

The moon methinks looks with a watery eye;
And when she weeps, weeps every little flower,
Lamenting some enforced chastity.
Tie up my love's tongue, bring him silently. [*Exeunt.*

Scene II. *Another Part of the Wood*

Enter Oberon

Oberon. I wonder if Titania be awak'd;
Then, what it was that next came in her eye
Which she must dote on in extremity.

Enter Puck

Here comes my messenger. —
How now, mad spirit!
What night-rule now about this haunted grove?

Puck. My mistress with a monster is in love.
Near to her close and consecrated bower,
While she was in her dull and sleeping hour,
A crew of patches, rude mechanicals,
That work for bread upon Athenian stalls,
Were met together to rehearse a play
Intended for great Theseus' nuptial day.

The shallowest thick-skin of that barren sort,
Who Pyramus presented, in their sport
Forsook his scene and enter'd in a brake;
When I did him at this advantage take,
An ass's nole I fixed on his head.
Anon his Thisbe must be answered,
And forth my mimic comes. When they him spy,
As wild geese that the creeping fowler eye,
Or russet-pated choughs, many in sort,
Rising and cawing at the gun's report,
Sever themselves and madly sweep the sky,
So, at his sight, away his fellows fly,
And, at our stamp, here o'er and o'er one falls;
He murther cries, and help from Athens calls.
Their sense thus weak, lost with their fears thus strong,
Made senseless things begin to do them wrong,
For briers and thorns at their apparel snatch;
Some sleeves, some hats, from yielders all things catch.
I led them on in this distracted fear,
And left sweet Pyramus translated there;
When in that moment, so it came to pass,
Titania wak'd and straightway lov'd an ass.

Oberon. This falls out better than I could devise.
But hast thou yet latch'd the Athenian's eyes
With the love-juice, as I did bid thee do?

Puck. I took him sleeping, — that is finish'd too, —
And the Athenian woman by his side;
That, when he wak'd, of force she must be eyed.

Enter Hermia *and* Demetrius

Oberon. Stand close; this is the same Athenian.

Puck. This is the woman, but not this the man.

Demetrius. O, why rebuke you him that loves you so?
Lay breath so bitter on your bitter foe.

Hermia. Now I but chide; but I should use thee worse,
For thou, I fear, hast given me cause to curse.
If thou hast slain Lysander in his sleep,
Being o'er shoes in blood, plunge in the deep
And kill me too.
The sun was not so true unto the day
As he to me; would he have stolen away
From sleeping Hermia? I 'll believe as soon
This whole earth may be bor'd, and that the moon
May through the centre creep and so displease
Her brother's noontide with the Antipodes.
It cannot be but thou hast murther'd him;
So should a murtherer look, so dead, so grim.

Demetrius. So should the murther'd look, and so should I,
Pierc'd through the heart with your stern cruelty;
Yet you, the murtherer, look as bright, as clear,
As yonder Venus in her glimmering sphere.

Hermia. What 's this to my Lysander? where is he?
Ah, good Demetrius, wilt thou give him me?

Demetrius. I had rather give his carcass to my hounds.

Hermia. Out, dog! out, cur! thou driv'st me past the bounds
Of maiden's patience. Hast thou slain him, then?
Henceforth be never number'd among men!
O, once tell true, tell true, even for my sake!
Durst thou have look'd upon him being awake,
And hast thou kill'd him sleeping? O brave touch!
Could not a worm, an adder, do so much?
An adder did it; for with doubler tongue
Than thine, thou serpent, never adder stung.

Demetrius. You spend your passion on a mispris'd mood.
I am not guilty of Lysander's blood;
Nor is he dead, for aught that I can tell.

Hermia. I pray thee, tell me then that he is well.

Demetrius. An if I could, what should I get therefore?

Hermia. A privilege never to see me more.
And from thy hated presence part I so;
See me no more, whether he be dead or no. [*Exit.*

Demetrius. There is no following her in this fierce vein;
Here therefore for a while I will remain.
So sorrow's heaviness doth heavier grow
For debt that bankrupt sleep doth sorrow owe,
Which now in some slight measure it will pay
If for his tender here I make some stay.
[*Lies down and sleeps.*

Oberon. What hast thou done? thou hast mistaken quite,

And laid the love-juice on some true-love's sight.
Of thy misprision must perforce ensue
Some true love turn'd, and not a false turn'd true.

Puck. Then fate o'errules, that, one man holding troth,
A million fail, confounding oath on oath.

Oberon. About the wood go swifter than the wind,
And Helena of Athens look thou find;
All fancy-sick she is and pale of cheer,
With sighs of love, that costs the fresh blood dear.
By some illusion see thou bring her here;
I 'll charm his eyes against she do appear.

Puck. I go, I go; look how I go,
Swifter than arrow from the Tartar's bow. [*Exit.*

Oberon. Flower of this purple dye,
Hit with Cupid's archery,
Sink in apple of his eye.
When his love he doth espy,
Let her shine as gloriously
As the Venus of the sky.
When thou wak'st, if she be by.
Beg of her for remedy.

Re-enter PUCK

Puck. Captain of our fairy band,
Helena is here at hand,
And the youth, mistook by me,
Pleading for a lover's fee.
Shall we their fond pageant see?
Lord, what fools these mortals be!

Oberon. Stand aside; the noise they make
Will cause Demetrius to awake.
Puck. Then will two at once woo one.
That must needs be sport alone;
And those things do best please me
That befall preposterously.

Enter LYSANDER *and* HELENA

Lysander. Why should you think that I should woo in scorn?
Scorn and derision never come in tears;
Look, when I vow I weep, and vows so born,
In their nativity all truth appears.
How can these things in me seem scorn to you,
Bearing the badge of faith to prove them true?
Helena. You do advance your cunning more and more.
When truth kills truth, O devilish-holy fray!
These vows are Hermia's; will you give her o'er?
Weigh oath with oath, and you will nothing weigh.
Your vows to her and me, put in two scales,
Will even weigh, and both as light as tales.
Lysander. I had no judgment when to her I swore.
Helena. Nor none, in my mind, now you give her o'er.
Lysander. Demetrius loves her, and he loves not you.
Demetrius. [*Awaking.*] O Helen, goddess, nymph, perfect, divine!
To what, my love, shall I compare thine eyne?
Crystal is muddy. O, how ripe in show
Thy lips, those kissing cherries, tempting grow!

That pure congealed white, high Taurus' snow,
Fann'd with the eastern wind, turns to a crow
When thou hold'st up thy hand. O, let me kiss
This princess of pure white, this seal of bliss!

Helena. O spite! O hell! I see you all are bent
To set against me for your merriment.
If you were civil and knew courtesy,
You would not do me thus much injury.
Can you not hate me, as I know you do,
But you must join in souls to mock me too?
If you were men, as men you are in show,
You would not use a gentle lady so;
To vow, and swear, and superpraise my parts,
When I am sure you hate me with your hearts.
You both are rivals and love Hermia;
And now both rivals, to mock Helena.
A trim exploit, a manly enterprise,
To conjure tears up in a poor maid's eyes
With your derision! none of noble sort
Would so offend a virgin, and extort
A poor soul's patience, all to make you sport.

Lysander. You are unkind, Demetrius; be not so,
For you love Hermia; this you know I know;
And here, with all good will, with all my heart,
In Hermia's love I yield you up my part;
And yours of Helena to me bequeath,
Whom I do love, and will do till my death.

Helena. Never did mockers waste more idle breath.

Demetrius. Lysander, keep thy Hermia; I will none.

If e'er I lov'd her, all that love is gone.
My heart to her but as guest-wise sojourn'd,
And now to Helen is it home return'd,
There to remain.

Lysander. Helen, it is not so.

Demetrius. Disparage not the faith thou dost not know,
Lest, to thy peril, thou abide it dear.
Look, where thy love comes; yonder is thy dear.

Enter HERMIA

Hermia. Dark night, that from the eye his function takes,
The ear more quick of apprehension makes;
Wherein it doth impair the seeing sense,
It pays the hearing double recompense.
Thou art not by mine eye, Lysander, found;
My ear, I thank it, brought me to thy sound.
But why unkindly didst thou leave me so?

Lysander. Why should he stay whom love doth press to go?

Hermia. What love could press Lysander from my side?

Lysander. Lysander's love, that would not let him bide;
Fair Helena, who more engilds the night
Than all yon fiery oes and eyes of light.
Why seek'st thou me? could not this make thee know,
The hate I bear thee made me leave thee so?

Hermia. You speak not as you think; it cannot be.

Helena. Lo, she is one of this confederacy!
Now I perceive they have conjoin'd all three

To fashion this false sport in spite of me. —
Injurious Hermia! most ungrateful maid!
Have you conspir'd, have you with these contriv'd
To bait me with this foul derision?
Is all the counsel that we two have shar'd,
The sisters' vows, the hours that we have spent,
When we have chid the hasty-footed time
For parting us, — O, is all forgot?
All school-days' friendship, childhood innocence?
We, Hermia, like two artificial gods,
Have with our needles created both one flower,
Both on one sampler, sitting on one cushion,
Both warbling of one song, both in one key,
As if our hands, our sides, voices, and minds,
Had been incorporate. So we grew together,
Like to a double cherry, seeming parted,
But yet an union in partition,
Two lovely berries moulded on one stem;
So, with two seeming bodies, but one heart,
Two of the first, like coats in heraldry
Due but to one and crowned with one crest.
And will you rent our ancient love asunder,
To join with men in scorning your poor friend?
It is not friendly, 't is not maidenly;
Our sex, as well as I, may chide you for it,
Though I alone do feel the injury.

Hermia. I am amazed at your passionate words.
I scorn you not; it seems that you scorn me.

Helena. Have you not set Lysander, as in scorn,

To follow me and praise my eyes and face?
And made your other love, Demetrius,
Who even but now did spurn me with his foot,
To call me goddess, nymph, divine and rare,
Precious, celestial? Wherefore speaks he this
To her he hates? and wherefore doth Lysander
Deny your love, so rich within his soul,
And tender me, forsooth, affection,
But by your setting on, by your consent?
What though I be not so in grace as you,
So hung upon with love, so fortunate,
But miserable most, to love unlov'd?
This you should pity rather than despise.

Hermia. I understand not what you mean by this.

Helena. Ay, do, persever, counterfeit sad looks,
Make mouths upon me when I turn my back,
Wink each at other, hold the sweet jest up;
This sport, well carried, shall be chronicled.
If you have any pity, grace, or manners,
You would not make me such an argument.
But fare ye well; 't is partly my own fault,
Which death or absence soon shall remedy.

Lysander. Stay, gentle Helena, hear my excuse;
My love, my life, my soul, fair Helena!

Helena. O excellent!

Hermia. Sweet, do not scorn her so.

Demetrius. If she cannot entreat, I can compel.

Lysander. Thou canst compel no more than she entreat;

Thy threats have no more strength than her weak prayers. —

Helen, I love thee; by my life, I do!
I swear by that which I will lose for thee,
To prove him false that says I love thee not.

Demetrius. I say I love thee more than he can do.

Lysander. If thou say so, withdraw, and prove it too.

Demetrius. Quick, come!

Hermia. Lysander, whereto tends all this?

Lysander. Away, you Ethiope!

Demetrius. No, no, sir;
Seem to break loose, take on as you would follow,
But yet come not; you are a tame man, go!

Lysander. Hang off, thou cat, thou burr! vile thing, let loose,
Or I will shake thee from me like a serpent!

Hermia. Why are you grown so rude? what change is this?
Sweet love, —

Lysander. Thy love! out, tawny Tartar, out!
Out, loathed medicine! hated potion, hence!

Hermia. Do you not jest?

Helena. Yes, sooth; and so do you.

Lysander. Demetrius, I will keep my word with thee.

Demetrius. I would I had your bond, for I perceive
A weak bond holds you; I 'll not trust your word.

Lysander. What, should I hurt her, strike her, kill her dead?
Although I hate her, I 'll not harm her so.

Hermia. What, can you do me greater harm than hate?

Hate me! wherefore? O me! what news, my love!
Am I not Hermia? are not you Lysander?
I am as fair now as I was erewhile.
Since night you lov'd me, yet since night you left me;
Why, then you left me — O, the gods forbid! —
In earnest, shall I say?

Lysander. Ay, by my life,
And never did desire to see thee more.
Therefore be out of hope, of question, of doubt;
Be certain, nothing truer; 't is no jest
That I do hate thee and love Helena.

Hermia. O me! you juggler! you canker-blossom!
You thief of love! what, have you come by night
And stolen my love's heart from him?

Helena. Fine, i' faith!
Have you no modesty, no maiden shame,
No touch of bashfulness? What, will you tear
Impatient answers from my gentle tongue?
Fie, fie! you counterfeit, you puppet, you!

Hermia. Puppet! why so? ay, that way goes the game.
Now I perceive that she hath made compare
Between our statures; she hath urg'd her height,
And with her personage, her tall personage,
Her height, forsooth, she hath prevail'd with him.
And are you grown so high in his esteem,
Because I am so dwarfish and so low?
How low am I, thou painted maypole? speak;
How low am I? I am not yet so low
But that my nails can reach unto thine eyes.

Helena. I pray you, though you mock me, gentlemen,
Let her not hurt me. I was never curst,
I have no gift at all in shrewishness;
I am a right maid for my cowardice.
Let her not strike me. You perhaps may think,
Because she is something lower than myself,
That I can match her.

Hermia. Lower! hark, again.

Helena. Good Hermia, do not be so bitter with me.
I evermore did love you, Hermia,
Did ever keep your counsels, never wrong'd you;
Save that, in love unto Demetrius,
I told him of your stealth unto this wood.
He follow'd you, for love I follow'd him,
But he hath chid me hence and threaten'd me
To strike me, spurn me, nay, to kill me too;
And now, so you will let me quiet go,
To Athens will I bear my folly back
And follow you no further. Let me go;
You see how simple and how fond I am.

Hermia. Why, get you gone; who is 't that hinders you?

Helena. A foolish heart, that I leave here behind.

Hermia. What, with Lysander?

Helena. With Demetrius.

Lysander. Be not afraid; she shall not harm thee, Helena.

Demetrius. No, sir, she shall not, though you take her part.

Helena. O, when she 's angry, she is keen and shrewd!
She was a vixen when she went to school;
And though she be but little, she is fierce.
Hermia. Little again! nothing but low and little!
Why will you suffer her to flout me thus?
Let me come to her.
Lysander. Get you gone, you dwarf,
You minimus, of hindering knot-grass made,
You bead, you acorn!
Demetrius. You are too officious
In her behalf that scorns your services.
Let her alone; speak not of Helena;
Take not her part; for if thou dost intend
Never so little show of love to her,
Thou shalt abide it.
Lysander. Now she holds me not;
Now follow, if thou dar'st, to try whose right,
Of thine or mine, is most in Helena.
Demetrius. Follow! nay, I 'll go with thee, cheek by jole. [*Exeunt Lysander and Demetrius.*
Hermia. You, mistress, all this coil is long of you;
Nay, go not back.
Helena. I will not trust you, I,
Nor longer stay in your curst company.
Your hands than mine are quicker for a fray,
My legs are longer, though, to run away. [*Exit.*
Hermia. I am amaz'd, and know not what to say. [*Exit.*
Oberon. This is thy negligence; still thou mistak'st,
Or else committ'st thy knaveries wilfully.

Puck. Believe me, king of shadows, I mistook.
Did not you tell me I should know the man
By the Athenian garments he had on?
And so far blameless proves my enterprise,
That I have 'nointed an Athenian's eyes;
And so far am I glad it so did sort,
As this their jangling I esteem a sport.

Oberon. Thou see'st these lovers seek a place to fight.
Hie therefore, Robin, overcast the night;
The starry welkin cover thou anon
With drooping fog as black as Acheron,
And lead these testy rivals so astray
As one come not within another's way.
Like to Lysander sometime frame thy tongue,
Then stir Demetrius up with bitter wrong;
And sometime rail thou like Demetrius;
And from each other look thou lead them thus,
Till o'er their brows death-counterfeiting sleep
With leaden legs and batty wings doth creep.
Then crush this herb into Lysander's eye,
Whose liquor hath this virtuous property,
To take from thence all error with his might
And make his eyeballs roll with wonted sight.
When they next wake, all this derision
Shall seem a dream and fruitless vision,
And back to Athens shall the lovers wend,
With league whose date till death shall never end.
Whiles I in this affair do thee employ

I 'll to my queen and beg her Indian boy;
And then I will her charmed eye release
From monster's view, and all things shall be peace.

Puck. My fairy lord, this must be done with haste,
For night's swift dragons cut the clouds full fast,
And yonder shines Aurora's harbinger,
At whose approach ghosts, wandering here and there,
Troop home to churchyards; damned spirits all,
That in crossways and floods have burial,
Already to their wormy beds are gone.
For fear lest day should look their shames upon,
They wilfully themselves exile from light,
And must for aye consort with black-brow'd night.

Oberon. But we are spirits of another sort.
I with the morning's love have oft made sport,
And, like a forester, the groves may tread
Even till the eastern gate, all fiery-red,
Opening on Neptune with fair blessed beams,
Turns into yellow gold his salt green streams.
But, notwithstanding, haste, make no delay;
We may effect this business yet ere day. [*Exit.*

Puck. Up and down, up and down,
I will lead them up and down.
I am fear'd in field and town;
Goblin, lead them up and down.
Here comes one.

Enter LYSANDER

Lysander. Where art thou, proud Demetrius? speak thou now.

Puck. Here, villain; drawn and ready. Where art thou?
Lysander. I will be with thee straight.
Puck. Follow me, then,
To plainer ground.
[*Exit Lysander, as following the voice.*

Enter Demetrius

Demetrius. Lysander! speak again;
Thou runaway, thou coward, art thou fled?
Speak! In some bush? Where dost thou hide thy head?
Puck. Thou coward, art thou bragging to the stars,
Telling the bushes that thou look'st for wars,
And wilt not come? Come, recreant; come, thou child.
I 'll whip thee with a rod; he is defil'd
That draws a sword on thee.
Demetrius. Yea, art thou there?
Puck. Follow my voice; we 'll try no manhood here.
[*Exeunt.*

Enter Lysander

Lysander. He goes before me and still dares me on;
When I come where he calls, then he is gone.
The villain is much lighter-heel'd than I.
I follow'd fast, but faster he did fly;
That fallen am I in dark uneven way,
And here will rest me. — [*Lies down.*] Come, thou gentle day!
For if but once thou show me thy grey light,
I 'll find Demetrius and revenge this spite. [*Sleeps.*

Enter Puck *and* Demetrius

Puck. Ho, ho, ho! Coward, why comest thou not?

Demetrius. Abide me, if thou dar'st; for well I wot
Thou runn'st before me, shifting every place,
And dar'st not stand, nor look me in the face.
Where art thou now?

Puck. Come hither; I am here.

Demetrius. Nay, then, thou mock'st me. Thou shalt buy this dear
If ever I thy face by daylight see;
Now, go thy way. Faintness constraineth me
To measure out my length on this cold bed.
By day's approach look to be visited.

[*Lies down and sleeps.*

Enter Helena

Helena. O weary night, O long and tedious night,
Abate thy hours! Shine comforts from the east,
That I may back to Athens by daylight
From these that my poor company detest;
And sleep, that sometime shuts up sorrow's eye,
Steal me awhile from mine own company.

[*Lies down and sleeps.*

Puck. Yet but three? Come one more;
Two of both kinds makes up four.
Here she comes, curst and sad;
Cupid is a knavish lad,
Thus to make poor females mad.

Enter Hermia

Hermia. Never so weary, never so in woe,
Bedabbled with the dew and torn with briers,
I can no further crawl, no further go;
My legs can keep no pace with my desires.
Here will I rest me till the break of day. —
Heavens shield Lysander, if they mean a fray!

[*Lies down and sleeps.*

Puck. On the ground
Sleep sound;
I 'll apply
To your eye,
Gentle lover, remedy.

[*Squeezing the juice on Lysander's eyes.*

When thou wak'st,
Thou tak'st
True delight
In the sight
Of thy former lady's eye;
And the country proverb known,
That every man should take his own,
In your waking shall be shown:
Jack shall have Jill;
Nought shall go ill;
The man shall have his mare again, and all shall be well.

[*Exit.*

BOTTOM AWAKING

ACT IV

SCENE I. *The Same.* LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HELENA, *and* HERMIA *lying asleep*

Enter TITANIA *and* BOTTOM; PEASEBLOSSOM, COBWEB, MOTH, MUSTARDSEED, *and other Fairies attending;* OBERON *behind unseen*

Titania. Come, sit thee down upon this flowery bed,
While I thy amiable cheeks do coy,
And stick musk-roses in thy sleek smooth head,
And kiss thy fair large ears, my gentle joy.
Bottom. Where 's Peaseblossom?

Peaseblossom. Ready.

Bottom. Scratch my head, Peaseblossom. — Where 's Mounsieur Cobweb?

Cobweb. Ready.

Bottom. Mounsieur Cobweb, good mounsieur, get you your weapons in your hand, and kill me a red-hipped humble-bee on the top of a thistle; and, good mounsieur, bring me the honey-bag. Do not fret yourself too much in the action, mounsieur; and, good mounsieur, have a care the honey-bag break not; I would be loath to have you overflown with a honey-bag, signior. — Where 's Mounsieur Mustardseed?

Mustardseed. Ready.

Bottom. Give me your neaf, Mounsieur Mustardseed? Pray you, leave your courtesy, good mounsieur.

Mustardseed. What 's your will?

Bottom. Nothing, good mounsieur, but to help Cavalery Cobweb to scratch. I must to the barber's, mounsieur, for methinks I am marvellous hairy about the face; and I am such a tender ass, if my hair do but tickle me I must scratch.

Titania. What, wilt thou hear some music, my sweet love?

Bottom. I have a reasonable good ear in music. Let 's have the tongs and the bones.

Titania. Or say, sweet love, what thou desir'st to eat.

Bottom. Truly, a peck of provender; I could munch your good dry oats. Methinks I have a great desire

to a bottle of hay; good hay, sweet hay, hath no fellow.

Titania. I have a venturous fairy that shall seek
The squirrel's hoard and fetch thee new nuts.

Bottom. I had rather have a handful or two of dried peas. But, I pray you, let none of your people stir me; I have an exposition of sleep come upon me.

Titania. Sleep thou, and I will wind thee in my arms. —
Fairies, be gone, and be all ways away. —

[*Exeunt fairies.*

So doth the woodbine the sweet honeysuckle
Gently entwist; the female ivy so
Enrings the barky fingers of the elm.
O, how I love thee! how I dote on thee! [*They sleep.*

Enter Puck

Oberon. [*Advancing.*] Welcome, good Robin. See'st thou this sweet sight?
Her dotage now I do begin to pity;
For, meeting her of late behind the wood,
Seeking sweet favours for this hateful fool,
I did upbraid her and fall out with her.
For she his hairy temples then had rounded
With coronet of fresh and fragrant flowers;
And that same dew, which sometime on the buds
Was wont to swell like round and orient pearls,
Stood now within the pretty flowerets' eyes
Like tears that did their own disgrace bewail.

When I had at my pleasure taunted her
And she in mild terms begg'd my patience,
I then did ask of her her changeling child,
Which straight she gave me, and her fairy sent
To bear him to my bower in fairy land.
And now I have the boy, I will undo
This hateful imperfection of her eyes.
And, gentle Puck, take this transformed scalp
From off the head of this Athenian swain;
That, he awaking when the other do,
May all to Athens back again repair
And think no more of this night's accidents
But as the fierce vexation of a dream.
But first I will release the fairy queen. —
Be as thou wast wont to be,
See as thou wast wont to see;
Dian's bud o'er Cupid's flower
Hath such force and blessed power. —
Now, my Titania; wake you, my sweet queen.

Titania. My Oberon! what visions have I seen!
Methought I was enamour'd of an ass.

Oberon. There lies your love.

Titania. How came these things to pass?
O, how mine eyes do loathe his visage now!

Oberon. Silence awhile. — Robin, take off this head. —
Titania, music call; and strike more dead
Than common sleep of all these five the sense.

Titania. Music, ho! music, such as charmeth sleep!

[*Music, still.*

Puck. Now, when thou wak'st, with thine own fool's eyes peep.

Oberon. Sound, music! — Come, my queen, take hands with me,
And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be.
Now thou and I are new in amity,
And will to-morrow midnight solemnly
Dance in Duke Theseus' house triumphantly
And bless it to all fair posterity.
There shall the pairs of faithful lovers be
Wedded, with Theseus, all in jollity.

Puck. Fairy king, attend and mark:
I do hear the morning lark.

Oberon. Then, my queen, in silence sad,
Trip we after the night's shade;
We the globe can compass soon,
Swifter than the wandering moon.

Titania. Come, my lord, and in our flight
Tell me how it came this night
That I sleeping here was found
With these mortals on the ground.

[*Exeunt.*

[*Horns winded within.*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, EGEUS, *and train*

Theseus. Go, one of you, find out the forester,
For now our observation is perform'd;
And since we have the vaward of the day,
My love shall hear the music of my hounds. —

Uncouple in the western valley; let them go! —
Dispatch, I say, and find the forester. —
[*Exit an Attendant.*
We will, fair queen, up to the mountain's top
And mark the musical confusion
Of hounds and echo in conjunction.

Hippolyta. I was with Hercules and Cadmus once,
When in a wood of Crete they bay'd the bear
With hounds of Sparta; never did I hear
Such gallant chiding, for, besides the groves,
The skies, the fountains, every region near
Seem'd all one mutual cry. I never heard
So musical a discord, such sweet thunder.

Theseus. My hounds are bred out of the Spartan kind,
So flew'd, so sanded, and their heads are hung
With ears that sweep away the morning dew;
Crook-kneed, and dew-lapp'd like Thessalian bulls;
Slow in pursuit, but match'd in mouth like bells,
Each under each. A cry more tuneable
Was never holla'd to, nor cheer'd with horn,
In Crete, in Sparta, nor in Thessaly;
Judge when you hear. — But, soft! what nymphs are these?

Egeus. My lord, this is my daughter here asleep;
And this Lysander; this Demetrius is;
This Helena, old Nedar's Helena.
I wonder of their being here together.

Theseus. No doubt they rose up early to observe
The rite of May, and, hearing our intent,
Came here in grace of our solemnity. —

But speak, Egeus; is not this the day
That Hermia should give answer of her choice?

Egeus. It is, my lord.

Theseus. Go, bid the huntsmen wake them with their horns. —

[*Horns and shout within. Lysander, Demetrius, Helena, and Hermia wake and start up.*

Good morrow, friends. Saint Valentine is past;
Begin these wood-birds but to couple now?

Lysander. Pardon, my lord.

Theseus. I pray you all, stand up.
I know you two are rival enemies;
How comes this gentle concord in the world,
That hatred is so far from jealousy
To sleep by hate and fear no enmity?

Lysander. My lord, I shall reply amazedly,
Half sleep, half waking; but as yet, I swear,
I cannot truly say how I came here, —
But, as I think, — for truly would I speak,
And now I do bethink me, so it is, —
I came with Hermia hither. Our intent
Was to be gone from Athens, where we might,
Without the peril of the Athenian law —

Egeus. Enough, enough, my lord, you have enough;
I beg the law, the law, upon his head.
They would have stolen away; they would, Demetrius,
Thereby to have defeated you and me,
You of your wife and me of my consent,
Of my consent that she should be your wife.

Demetrius. My lord, fair Helen told me of their stealth,
Of this their purpose hither to this wood;
And I in fury hither follow'd them,
Fair Helena in fancy following me.
But, my good lord, I wot not by what power,—
But by some power it is,—my love to Hermia,
Melted as the snow, seems to me now
As the remembrance of an idle gawd
Which in my childhood I did dote upon;
And all the faith, the virtue of my heart,
The object and the pleasure of mine eye,
Is only Helena. To her, my lord,
Was I betroth'd ere I saw Hermia.
But, like in sickness, did I loathe this food;
But, as in health, come to my natural taste,
Now I do wish it, love it, long for it,
And will for evermore be true to it.

Theseus. Fair lovers, you are fortunately met;
Of this discourse we more will hear anon.—
Egeus, I will overbear your will,
For in the temple, by and by, with us
These couples shall eternally be knit;
And, for the morning now is something worn,
Our purpos'd hunting shall be set aside.
Away with us to Athens; three and three,
We 'll hold a feast in great solemnity.—
Come, Hippolyta.

[*Exeunt Theseus, Hippolyta, Egeus, and train.*

Demetrius. These things seem small and undistinguishable,
Like far-off mountains turned into clouds.
Hermia. Methinks I see these things with parted eye,
When every thing seems double.
Helena. So methinks;
And I have found Demetrius like a jewel,
Mine own, and not mine own.
Demetrius. Are you sure
That we are awake? It seems to me
That yet we sleep, we dream. Do not you think
The duke was here and bid us follow him?
Hermia. Yea; and my father.
Helena. And Hippolyta.
Lysander. And he did bid us follow to the temple.
Demetrius. Why, then, we are awake; let 's follow him,
And by the way let us recount our dreams. [*Exeunt.*

Bottom. [*Awaking.*] When my cue comes, call me and I will answer; my next is, 'Most fair Pyramus.' Heigh-ho! — Peter Quince! — Flute, the bellows-mender! — Snout, the tinker! — Starveling! — God's my life, stolen hence, and left me asleep! I have had a most rare vision. I have had a dream, past the wit of man to say what dream it was; man is but an ass if he go about to expound this dream. Methought I was — there is no man can tell what. Methought I was, — and methought I had, — but man is but a patched fool if he will offer to say what methought I

had. The eye of man hath not heard, the ear of man hath not seen, man's hand is not able to taste, his tongue to conceive, nor his heart to report, what my dream was. I will get Peter Quince to write a ballad of this dream; it shall be called Bottom's Dream, because it hath no bottom, and I will sing it in the latter end of a play, before the duke. Peradventure, to make it the more gracious, I shall sing it at her death. [*Exit.*

SCENE II. *Athens. Quince's House*

Enter QUINCE, FLUTE, SNOUT, *and* STARVELING

Quince. Have you sent to Bottom's house? is he come home yet?

Starveling. He cannot be heard of. Out of doubt he is transported.

Flute. If he come not, then the play is marred; it goes not forward, doth it?

Quince. It is not possible; you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he.

Flute. No, he hath simply the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens.

Quince. Yea, and the best person too; and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice.

Flute. You must say paragon; a paramour is, God bless us, a thing of naught.

Enter SNUG

Snug. Masters, the duke is coming from the temple, and there is two or three lords and ladies more mar-

ried; if our sport had gone forward, we had all been made men.

Flute. O, sweet bully Bottom! Thus hath he lost sixpence a day during his life; he could not have scaped sixpence a day. An the duke had not given him sixpence a day for playing Pyramus, I 'll be hanged; he would have deserved it, — sixpence a day in Pyramus, or nothing.

Enter Bottom

Bottom. Where are these lads? where are these hearts?

Quince. Bottom! O most courageous day! O most happy hour!

Bottom. Masters, I am to discourse wonders; but ask me not what, for if I tell you I am no true Athenian. I will tell you every thing, right as it fell out.

Quince. Let us hear, sweet Bottom.

Bottom. Not a word of me. All that I will tell you is that the duke hath dined. Get your apparel together, good strings to your beards, new ribbons to your pumps; meet presently at the palace; every man look o'er his part; for the short and the long is, our play is preferred. In any case, let Thisby have clean linen; and let not him that plays the lion pare his nails, for they shall hang out for the lion's claws. And, most dear actors, eat no onions nor garlic, for we are to utter sweet breath; and I do not doubt but to hear them say it is a sweet comedy. No more words; away! go, away! [*Exeunt.*

"I AM SENT WITH BROOM BEFORE"

ACT V

SCENE I. *Athens. The Palace of Theseus*

Enter THESEUS, HIPPOLYTA, PHILOSTRATE, Lords, *and* Attendants

Hippolyta. 'T is strange, my Theseus, that these lovers speak of.

Theseus. More strange than true; I never may believe
These antique fables, nor these fairy toys.
Lovers and madmen have such seething brains,

Such shaping fantasies, that apprehend
More than cool reason ever comprehends.
The lunatic, the lover, and the poet
Are of imagination all compact:
One sees more devils than vast hell can hold,
That is, the madman; the lover, all as frantic,
Sees Helen's beauty in a brow of Egypt;
The poet's eye, in a fine frenzy rolling,
Doth glance from heaven to earth, from earth to heaven,
And as imagination bodies forth
The forms of things unknown, the poet's pen
Turns them to shapes, and gives to airy nothing
A local habitation and a name.
Such tricks hath strong imagination
That, if it would but apprehend some joy,
It comprehends some bringer of that joy;
Or in the night, imagining some fear,
How easy is a bush suppos'd a bear!

Hippolyta. But all the story of the night told over,
And all their minds transfigur'd so together,
More witnesseth than fancy's images,
And grows to something of great constancy,
But, howsoever, strange and admirable.

Theseus. Here come the lovers, full of joy and mirth. —

Enter LYSANDER, DEMETRIUS, HERMIA, *and* HELENA

Joy, gentle friends! joy and fresh days of love
Accompany your hearts!

Lysander. More than to us

Wait in your royal walks, your board, your bed!

Theseus. Come now; what masques, what dances shall we have,
To wear away this long age of three hours
Between our after-supper and bed-time?
Where is our usual manager of mirth?
What revels are in hand? Is there no play,
To ease the anguish of a torturing hour?—
Call Philostrate.

Philostrate. Here, mighty Theseus.

Theseus. Say, what abridgment have you for this evening?
What masque? what music? How shall we beguile
The lazy time, if not with some delight?

Philostrate. There is a brief how many sports are ripe;
Make choice of which your highness will see first.

[*Giving a paper.*

Theseus. [Reads] '*The battle with the Centaurs, to be sung*
By an Athenian eunuch to the harp.'
We 'll none of that; that have I told my love,
In glory of my kinsman Hercules.
[Reads] '*The riot of the tipsy Bacchanals,*
Tearing the Thracian singer in their rage.'
That is an old device; and it was play'd
When I from Thebes came last a conqueror.
[Reads] '*The thrice three Muses mourning for the death*
Of Learning, late deceas'd in beggary.'

That is some satire, keen and critical,
Not sorting with a nuptial ceremony.
[Reads] '*A tedious brief scene of young Pyramus*
And his love Thisbe; very tragical mirth.'
Merry and tragical! tedious and brief!
That is, hot ice and wondrous strange snow.
How shall we find the concord of this discord?
Philostrate. A play there is, my lord, some ten words long,
Which is as brief as I have known a play;
But by ten words, my lord, it is too long,
Which makes it tedious, for in all the play
There is not one word apt, one player fitted.
And tragical, my noble lord, it is,
For Pyramus therein doth kill himself;
Which, when I saw rehears'd, I must confess,
Made mine eyes water, but more merry tears
The passion of loud laughter never shed.
Theseus. What are they that do play it?
Philostrate. Hard-handed men that work in Athens here,
Which never labour'd in their minds till now,
And now have toil'd their unbreath'd memories
With this same play, against your nuptial.
Theseus. And we will hear it.
Philostrate. No, my noble lord,
It is not for you; I have heard it over,
And it is nothing, nothing in the world,
Unless you can find sport in their intents,

Extremely stretch'd and conn'd with cruel pain,
To do you service.

Theseus. I will hear that play;
For never any thing can be amiss
When simpleness and duty tender it.
Go, bring them in; — and take your places, ladies.

[*Exit Philostrate.*

Hippolyta. I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharg'd,
And duty in his service perishing.

Theseus. Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.

Hippolyta. He says they can do nothing in this kind.

Theseus. The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.

Our sport shall be to take what they mistake;
And what poor duty cannot do, noble respect
Takes it in might, not merit.
Where I have come, great clerks have purposed
To greet me with premeditated welcomes;
Where I have seen them shiver and look pale,
Make periods in the midst of sentences,
Throttle their practis'd accent in their fears,
And in conclusion dumbly have broke off,
Not paying me a welcome. Trust me, sweet,
Out of this silence yet I pick'd a welcome;
And in the modesty of fearful duty
I read as much as from the rattling tongue
Of saucy and audacious eloquence.
Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity
In least speak most, to my capacity.

Enter PHILOSTRATE

Philostrate. So please your grace, the Prologue is address'd.

Theseus. Let him approach. [*Flourish of trumpets.*

Enter QUINCE *for the* Prologue

Prologue. If we offend, it is with our good will.
That you should think, we come not to offend,
But with good will. To show our simple skill,
That is the true beginning of our end.
Consider then we come but in despite.
We do not come as minding to content you,
Our true intent is. All for your delight
We are not here. That you should here repent you,
The actors are at hand, and by their show
You shall know all that you are like to know.

Theseus. This fellow doth not stand upon points.

Lysander. He hath rid his prologue like a rough colt; he knows not the stop. A good moral, my lord: it is not enough to speak, but to speak true.

Hippolyta. Indeed he hath played on his prologue like a child on a recorder; a sound, but not in government.

Theseus. His speech was like a tangled chain; nothing impaired, but all disordered. Who is next?

Enter PYRAMUS *and* THISBE, WALL, MOONSHINE, *and* LION

Prologue. Gentles, perchance you wonder at this show;
But wonder on, till truth make all things plain.

This man is Pyramus, if you would know;
This beauteous lady Thisby is certain.
This man, with lime and rough-cast, doth present
Wall, that vile Wall which did these lovers sunder;
And through Wall's chink, poor souls, they are content
To whisper, at the which let no man wonder.
This man, with lanthorn, dog, and bush of thorn,
Presenteth Moonshine; for, if you will know,
By moonshine did these lovers think no scorn
To meet at Ninus' tomb, there, there to woo.
This grisly beast, which Lion hight by name,
The trusty Thisby, coming first by night,
Did scare away, or rather did affright;
And, as she fled, her mantle she did fall,
Which Lion vile with bloody mouth did stain.
Anon comes Pyramus, sweet youth and tall,
And finds his trusty Thisby's mantle slain;
Whereat, with blade, with bloody blameful blade,
He bravely broach'd his boiling bloody breast,
And Thisby, tarrying in mulberry shade,
His dagger drew and died. For all the rest,
Let Lion, Moonshine, Wall, and lovers twain
At large discourse while here they do remain.

[*Exeunt Prologue, Thisbe, Lion, and Moonshine.*

Theseus. I wonder if the lion be to speak.

Demetrius. No wonder, my lord; one lion may, when many asses do.

Wall. In this same interlude it doth befall
That I, one Snout by name, present a wall;
And such a wall, as I would have you think,
That had in it a crannied hole or chink,
Through which the lovers, Pyramus and Thisby,
Did whisper often very secretly.

This loam, this rough-cast, and this stone doth show
That I am that same wall; the truth is so,
And this the cranny is, right and sinister,
Through which the fearful lovers are to whisper.

Theseus. Would you desire lime and hair to speak better?

Demetrius. It is the wittiest partition that ever I heard discourse, my lord.

Theseus. Pyramus draws near the wall; silence!

Enter PYRAMUS

Pyramus. O grim-look'd night! O night with hue so black!
O night, which ever art when day is not!
O night, O night! alack, alack, alack,
I fear my Thisby's promise is forgot!—
And thou, O wall, O sweet, O lovely wall,
That stand'st between her father's ground and mine!
Thou wall, O wall, O sweet and lovely wall,
Show me thy chink, to blink through with mine eyne!
[*Wall holds up his fingers.*
Thanks, courteous wall; Jove shield thee well for this!—
But what see I? No Thisby do I see.—
O wicked wall, through whom I see no bliss!
Curst be thy stones for thus deceiving me!

Theseus. The wall, methinks, being sensible, should curse again.

Pyramus. No, in truth, sir, he should not. 'Deceiving me' is Thisby's cue; she is to enter now, and I am to spy her through the wall. You shall see, it will fall pat as I told you. Yonder she comes.

Enter THISBE

Thisbe. O wall, full often hast thou heard my moans,
For parting my fair Pyramus and me!
My cherry lips have often kiss'd thy stones,
Thy stones with lime and hair knit up in thee.

Pyramus. I see a voice; now will I to the chink,
To spy an I can hear my Thisby's face. —
Thisby!

Thisbe. My love thou art, my love I think.

Pyramus. Think what thou wilt, I am thy lover's grace;
And, like Limander, am I trusty still.

Thisbe. And I like Helen, till the Fates me kill.

Pyramus. Not Shafalus to Procrus was so true.

Thisbe. As Shafalus to Procrus, I to you.

Pyramus. O, kiss me through the hole of this vile wall!

Thisbe. I kiss the wall's hole, not your lips at all.

Pyramus. Wilt thou at Ninny's tomb meet me straightway?

Thisbe. Tide life, tide death, I come without delay.

[*Exeunt Pyramus and Thisbe.*

Wall. Thus have I, Wall, my part discharged so;
And, being done, thus Wall away doth go. [*Exit.*

Theseus. Now is the mural down between the two neighbours.

Demetrius. No remedy, my lord, when walls are so wilful to hear without warning.

Hippolyta. This is the silliest stuff that ever I heard.

Theseus. The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them.

Hippolyta. It must be your imagination then, and not theirs.

Theseus. If we imagine no worse of them than they of themselves, they may pass for excellent men. Here come two noble beasts in, a man and a lion.

Enter LION *and* MOONSHINE

Lion. You, ladies, you, whose gentle hearts do fear
The smallest monstrous mouse that creeps on floor,
May now perchance both quake and tremble here,
When lion rough in wildest rage doth roar.
Then know that I, one Snug the joiner, am
A lion fell, nor else no lion's dam;
For if I should as lion come in strife
Into this place, 't were pity of my life.

Theseus. A very gentle beast, and of a good conscience.

Demetrius. The very best at a beast, my lord, that e'er I saw.

Lysander. This lion is a very fox for his valour.

Theseus. True; and a goose for his discretion.

Demetrius. Not so, my lord; for his valour cannot carry his discretion, and the fox carries the goose.

Theseus. His discretion, I am sure, cannot carry his valour, for the goose carries not the fox. It is well; leave it to his discretion, and let us listen to the moon.

Moon. This lanthorn doth the horned moon present; —

Demetrius. He should have worn the horns on his head.

Theseus. He is no crescent, and his horns are invisible within the circumference.

Moon. This lanthorn doth the horned moon present;
Myself the man i' the moon do seem to be.

Theseus. This is the greatest error of all the rest. The man should be put into the lanthorn. How is it else the man i' the moon?

Demetrius. He dares not come there for the candle; for you see it is already in snuff.

Hippolyta. I am aweary of this moon; would he would change!

Theseus. It appears, by his small light of discretion, that he is in the wane; but yet, in courtesy, in all reason, we must stay the time.

Lysander. Proceed, Moon.

Moon. All that I have to say is to tell you that the lanthorn is the moon; I, the man i' the moon; this thorn-bush, my thorn-bush; and this dog, my dog.

Demetrius. Why, all these should be in the lanthorn, for they are in the moon. But silence! here comes Thisbe.

Enter THISBE

Thisbe. This is old Ninny's tomb. Where is my love?

Lion. [*Roaring.*] Oh —— [*Thisbe runs off.*

Demetrius. Well roared, Lion.

Theseus. Well run, Thisbe.

Hippolyta. Well shone, Moon. Truly, the Moon shines with a good grace.

[*The Lion shakes Thisbe's mantle, and exit.*

Theseus. Well moused, Lion.

Demetrius. And then came Pyramus.

Lysander. And so the lion vanished.

Enter PYRAMUS

Pyramus. Sweet Moon, I thank thee for thy sunny beams:
I thank thee, Moon, for shining now so bright;
For, by thy gracious, golden, glittering gleams,
I trust to take of truest Thisby sight.
But stay, O spite!
But mark, poor knight,
What dreadful dole is here?
Eyes, do you see?
How can it be? —
O dainty duck! O dear!
Thy mantle good,
What, stained with blood! —
Approach, ye Furies fell! —
O Fates, come, come,
Cut thread and thrum;
Quail, crush, conclude, and quell!

Theseus. This passion, and the death of a dear friend, would go near to make a man look sad.

Hippolyta. Beshrew my heart, but I pity the man.

Pyramus. O wherefore, Nature, didst thou lions frame?
Since lion vile hath here deflower'd my dear:
Which is — no, no — which was the fairest dame
That liv'd, that lov'd, that lik'd, that look'd with cheer.
Come, tears, confound;
Out, sword, and wound
The pap of Pyramus;
Ay, that left pap,
Where heart doth hop: [*Stabs himself.*

Thus die I, thus, thus, thus.
Now am I dead,
Now am I fled,
My soul is in the sky;
Tongue, lose thy light!
Moon, take thy flight! [*Exit Moonshine.*
Now die, die, die, die, die. [*Dies.*

Demetrius. No die, but an ace, for him; for he is but one.

Lysander. Less than an ace, man, for he is dead; he is nothing.

Theseus. With the help of a surgeon he might yet recover, and prove an ass.

Hippolyta. How chance Moonshine is gone before Thisbe comes back and finds her lover?

Theseus. She will find him by starlight. Here she comes, and her passion ends the play.

Re-enter THISBE

Hippolyta. Methinks she should not use a long one for such a Pyramus; I hope she will be brief.

Demetrius. A mote will turn the balance, which Pyramus, which Thisbe, is the better: he for a man, God warrant us; she for a woman, God bless us.

Lysander. She hath spied him already with those sweet eyes.

Demetrius. And thus she moans, videlicet:—

Thisbe. Asleep, my love?
What, dead, my dove?

O Pyramus, arise!
Speak, speak. Quite dumb?
Dead, dead? A tomb
Must cover thy sweet eyes.
These lily lips,
This cherry nose,
These yellow cowslip cheeks,
Are gone, are gone. —
Lovers, make moan!
His eyes were green as leeks. —
O Sisters Three,
Come, come to me,
With hands as pale as milk;
Lay them in gore,
Since you have shore
With shears his thread of silk. —
Tongue, not a word;
Come, trusty sword;
Come, blade, my breast imbrue. — [*Stabs herself.*
And, farewell, friends!
Thus Thisby ends;
Adieu, adieu, adieu! [*Dies.*

Theseus. Moonshine and Lion are left to bury the dead.

Demetrius. Ay, and Wall too.

Bottom. [*Starting up.*] No, I assure you; the wall is down that parted their fathers. Will it please you to see the epilogue, or to hear a Bergomask dance between two of our company?

Theseus. No epilogue, I pray you, for your play needs no excuse. Never excuse, for when the players are all dead, there need none to be blamed. Marry, if

he that writ it had played Pyramus and hanged himself in Thisbe's garter, it would have been a fine tragedy; and so it is, truly, and very notably discharged. But, come, your Bergomask; let your epilogue alone.

[*A dance.*

The iron tongue of midnight hath told twelve.
Lovers, to bed; 't is almost fairy time.
I fear we shall out-sleep the coming morn
As much as we this night have overwatch'd.
This palpable-gross play hath well beguil'd
The heavy gait of night. Sweet friends, to bed.
A fortnight hold we this solemnity,
In nightly revels and new jollity.

[*Exeunt.*

Enter PUCK

Puck. Now the hungry lion roars,
And the wolf behowls the moon,
Whilst the heavy ploughman snores,
All with weary task fordone.
Now the wasted brands do glow,
Whilst the screech-owl, screeching loud,
Puts the wretch that lies in woe
In remembrance of a shroud.
Now it is the time of night
That the graves, all gaping wide,
Every one lets forth his sprite,
In the church-way paths to glide,
And we fairies, that do run
By the triple Hecate's team,

From the presence of the sun,
Following darkness like a dream,
Now are frolic; not a mouse
Shall disturb this hallow'd house.
I am sent with broom before,
To sweep the dust behind the door.

Enter OBERON *and* TITANIA *with their train*

Oberon. Through the house give glimmering light,
By the dead and drowsy fire;
Every elf and fairy sprite
Hop as light as bird from brier,
And this ditty, after me,
Sing, and dance it trippingly.

Titania. First, rehearse your song by rote,
To each word a warbling note;
Hand in hand, with fairy grace,
Will we sing, and bless this place.

[*Song and dance.*

Oberon. Now, until the break of day,
Through this house each fairy stray
To the best bride-bed will we,
Which by us shall blessed be.
So shall all the couples three
Ever true in loving be,
And the blots of Nature's hand
Shall not in their issue stand;
Never mole, hare-lip, nor scar,
Nor mark prodigious, such as are

Despised in nativity,
Shall upon their children be.
With this field-dew consecrate,
Every fairy take his gait;
And each several chamber bless,
Through this palace, with sweet peace;
And the owner of it blest
Ever shall in safety rest.
Trip away, make no stay;
Meet me all by break of day.

[*Exeunt Oberon, Titania, and train.*

Puck. If we shadows have offended,
Think but this, and all is mended,
That you have but slumber'd here
While these visions did appear.
And this weak and idle theme,
No more yielding but a dream,
Gentles, do not reprehend.
If you pardon, we will mend.
And, as I am an honest Puck,
If we have unearned luck
Now to scape the serpent's tongue,
We will make amends ere long;
Else the Puck a liar call.
So, good night unto you all.
Give me your hands, if we be friends,
And Robin shall restore amends. [*Exit.*

NOTES

THESEUS AND THE CENTAUR

NOTES

INTRODUCTION

THE METRE OF THE PLAY. — It should be understood at the outset that *metre*, or the mechanism of verse, is something altogether distinct from the *music* of verse. The one is matter of rule, the other of taste and feeling. Music is not an absolute necessity of verse; the metrical form is a necessity, being that which constitutes the verse.

The plays of Shakespeare (with the exception of rhymed passages, and of occasional songs and interludes) are all in unrhymed or *blank* verse; and the normal form of this blank verse is illustrated by the third line of the present play: "Another moon; but O, methinks, how slow."

This line, it will be seen, consists of ten syllables, with the even syllables (2d, 4th, 6th, 8th, and 10th) accented, the odd syllables (1st, 3d, etc.) being unaccented. Theoretically, it is made up of

five *feet* of two syllables each, with the accent on the second syllable. Such a foot is called an *iambus* (plural, *iambuses*, or the Latin *iambi*), and the form of verse is called *iambic*.

This fundamental law of Shakespeare's verse is subject to certain modifications, the most important of which are as follows: —

1. After the tenth syllable an unaccented syllable (or even two such syllables) may be added, forming what is sometimes called a *female* line; as in the 191st line of the first scene: "The rest I 'd give to be to you translated." The rhythm is complete with the second syllable of *translated*, the third being an extra eleventh syllable. In line 156 we have two extra syllables, the rhythm being complete with the first syllable of *Hermia*.

2. The accent in any part of the verse may be shifted from an even to an odd syllable; as in the fifth line of the play: "Like to a step-dame or a dowager"; where the accent is shifted from the second to the first syllable. So in lines 20 and 22, and others that will be readily found. In line 9 the accent is shifted from the sixth syllable to the fifth. This change occurs very rarely in the tenth syllable, and seldom in the fourth; and it is not allowable in two successive accented syllables.

3. An extra unaccented syllable may occur in any part of the line; as in lines 6, 12, and 27. In 6 the second syllable of *withering* is superfluous; in 12 both the first and third syllables of *Athenian;* and in 27 the word *hath*.

4. Any unaccented syllable, occurring in an even place immediately before or after an even syllable which is properly accented, is reckoned as accented for the purposes of the verse; as, for instance, in lines 1 and 5. In 1 the last syllable of *Hippolyta* is metrically equivalent to an accented syllable; and so with the last syllable of *dowager* in 5. Other examples are the last syllable of *revenue* in line 6; the second of *solemnities* and the last of *Philostrate* in line 11; and the third of *melancholy* and of *funerals* in line 14. In ii. 1. 100, and also in iv. 1. 187, *undistinguishable* has three metrical accents; and the same is true of *insufficiency* in ii. 2. 128.

In 23 *Hermia* must be made distinctly a trisyllable (as often), but in 46 and 67 (as often) it is virtually a dissyllable.

5. In many instances in Shakespeare words must be *lengthened* in order to fill out the rhythm : —

(*a*) In a large class of words in which *e* or *i* is followed by another vowel, the *e* or *i* is made a separate syllable ; as *ocean*, *opinion*, *soldier*, *patience*, *partial*, *marriage*, etc. For instance, line 149 of the first scene of the present play appears to have only nine syllables, but *confusion* is a quadrisyllable. In 152 *patience* is a trisyllable ; and other instances are mentioned in the Notes. This lengthening occurs most frequently at the end of the line.

(*b*) Many monosyllables ending in *r*, *re*, *rs*, *res*, preceded by a long vowel or diphthong, are often made dissyllables; as *fare*, *fear*, *dear*, *fire*, *hair*, *hour*, *your*, etc. In ii. 1. 246: "I know a bank where the wild thyme blows," *where* is a dissyllable. If the word is repeated in a verse it is often both monosyllable and dissyllable ; as in *M. of V.* iii. 2. 20 : "And so, though yours, not yours. Prove it so," where either *yours* (preferably the first) is a dissyllable, the other being a monosyllable. In *J. C.* iii. 1. 172: "As fire drives out fire, so pity, pity," the first *fire* is a dissyllable.

(*c*) Words containing *l* or *r*, preceded by another consonant, are often pronounced as if a vowel came between the consonants; as in iii. 2. 282: "O me! you juggler [jugg(e)ler]! you canker-blossom ! " which is also a female line; ii. 1. 23: "She never had so sweet a changeling" ; where the *e* in *changeling* forms an extra syllable; and v. 1. 59: "That is, hot ice and wondrous [wond(e)rous] strange snow." Other examples are *T. of S.* ii. 1. 158: "While she did call me rascal fiddler" [fidd(e)ler]; *All's Well*, iii. 5. 43: "If you will tarry, holy pilgrim" [pilg(e)rim]; *C. of E.* v. 1. 360: "These are the parents of these children" (childeren, the original form of the word); *W. T.* iv. 4. 76: "Grace and remembrance [rememb(e)rance] be to you both ! " etc.

(*d*) Monosyllabic exclamations (*ay*, *O*, *yea*, *nay*, *hail*, etc.) and monosyllables otherwise emphasized are similarly lengthened ; also

certain longer words; as *business* (trisyllable, as originally pronounced) in i. 1. 124: "I must employ you in some business"; and in *J. C.* iv. 1. 22: "To groan and sweat under the business" (so in several other passages); and other words mentioned in the notes to the plays in which they occur.

6. Words are also *contracted* for metrical reasons, like plurals and possessives ending in a sibilant, as *balance*, *horse* (for *horses* and *horse's*), *princess*, *sense*, *marriage* (plural and possessive), *image*, and other words mentioned in the notes on the plays.

7. The *accent* of words is also varied in many instances for metrical reasons. Thus we find both *révenue* and *revénue* in the first scene of this play (lines 6 and 158), *édict* (see on i. 1. 151) and *édict*, *exile* (see on iii. 2. 386) and *éxile*, *óbscure* and *obscúre*, *púrsue* and *pursúe*, *distinct* and *distinct*, etc.

These instances of variable accent must not be confounded with those in which words were uniformly accented differently in the time of Shakespeare; like *aspéct*, *impórtune*, *perséver* (see on iii. 2. 237), *perséverance*, *rheúmatic* (see on ii. 1. 105), etc.

8. *Alexandrines*, or verses of twelve syllables, with six accents, occur here and there; as in the inscriptions on the caskets in *M. of V.* and scattered instances in other plays. In this play there are none. They must not be confounded with female lines with two extra syllables (see on 1 above) or with other lines in which two extra unaccented syllables may occur.

9. *Incomplete* verses, of one or more syllables, are scattered through the plays. See iii. 2. 49, iv. 1. 137, v. 1. 92, 107, etc.

10. *Doggerel* measure is used in the very earliest comedies (*L. L. L.* and *C. of E.* in particular) in the mouths of comic characters, but nowhere else in those plays, and never anywhere after 1596 or 1597. There is none in this play, although it is earlier than that.

11. *Rhyme* occurs frequently in the early plays, but diminishes with comparative regularity from that period until the latest. Thus, in *L. L. L.* there are about 1100 rhyming verses (about one-third of the whole number), in *Richard II.* and *R. and J.* about 500

each, while in *Cor.* and *A. and C.* there are only about 40 each, in the *Temp.* only two, and in the *W. T.* none at all, except in the chorus introducing act iv. Songs, interludes, and other matter not in ten-syllable measure are not included in this enumeration. In the present play, out of some 1300 ten-syllable verses, almost 600 are in rhyme. There are also more than 200 shorter lines of rhyme.

Alternate rhymes are found only in the plays written before 1599 or 1600. In *M. of V.* there are only four lines at the end of iii. 2. In *Much Ado* and *A. Y. L.*, we also find a few lines, but none at all in subsequent plays. In this play there are about sixty.

Rhymed couplets, or "rhyme-tags" are often found at the end of scenes which are otherwise in blank verse, or sometimes even in prose (as *Hen. V.* iii. 7, etc.). In *Ham.* 14 out of 20 scenes, and in *Macb.* 21 out of 28, have such "tags"; but in the latest plays they are not so frequent. The *Temp.*, for instance, has but one, and the *W. T.* none. In this play there are none, properly so called, as all rhymes at the end of scenes are preceded by rhyme.

12. Supernatural characters in the plays — the Fairies in the present play, the Witches in *Macbeth*, and the Spirits in the *Tempest* — regularly speak in *trochaic* metre when they do not use the ten-syllable iambic verse. In trochaic metre the accents are on the *odd* syllables (the 1st, 3d, 5th, etc.), with occasional variations, as in other forms of verse. In Shakespeare the lines are usually of seven syllables.

13. In this edition of Shakespeare, the final *-ed* of past tenses and participles is printed *-'d* when the word is to be pronounced in the ordinary way; as in *bewitch'd*, line 27, and *interchang'd*, line 29, of the first scene. But when the metre requires that the *-ed* be made a separate syllable, the *e* is retained; as in *crazed*, line 92, of the first scene, where the word is a dissyllable. The only variation from this rule is in verbs like *cry*, *die*, etc., the *-ed* of which is very rarely made a separate syllable.

Shakespeare's Use of Verse and Prose in the Plays. — This is a subject to which the critics have given very little attention, but it is an interesting study. In the present play we find scenes entirely in verse or in prose, and others in which the two are mixed. In general, we may say that verse is used for what is distinctly poetical, and prose for what is not poetical. The distinction, however, is not so clearly marked in the earlier as in the later plays. The second scene of *M. of V.*, for instance, is in prose, because Portia and Nerissa are talking about the suitors in a familiar and playful way; but in the *T. G. of V.*, where Julia and Lucetta are discussing the suitors of the former in much the same fashion, the scene is in verse. Dowden, commenting on *Rich. II.*, remarks: "Had Shakespeare written the play a few years later, we may be certain that the gardener and his servants (iii. 4) would not have uttered stately speeches in verse, but would have spoken homely prose, and that humour would have mingled with the pathos of the scene. The same remark may be made with reference to the subsequent scene (v. 5) in which his groom visits the dethroned king in the Tower." Comic characters and those in low life generally speak in prose in the later plays, but in the very earliest ones doggerel verse is much used instead. See on 10 above.

The change from prose to verse is well illustrated in the third scene of *M. of V.* It begins with plain prosaic talk about a business matter; but when Antonio enters, it rises at once to the higher level of poetry. The sight of Antonio reminds Shylock of his hatred of the Merchant, and the passion expresses itself in verse, the vernacular tongue of poetry. We have a similar change in the first scene of *J. C.*, where, after the quibbling "chaff" of the mechanics about their trades, the mention of Pompey reminds the Tribune of their plebeian fickleness, and his scorn and indignation flame out in most eloquent verse.

The reasons for the choice of prose or verse are not always so clear as in these instances. We are seldom puzzled to explain the prose, but not unfrequently we meet with verse where we might

expect prose. As Professor Corson remarks (*Introduction to Shakespeare*, 1889), "Shakespeare adopted verse as the general tenor of his language, and therefore expressed much in verse that is within the capabilities of prose; in other words, his verse constantly encroaches upon the domain of prose, but his prose can never be said to encroach upon the domain of verse." If, in rare instances, we think we find exceptions to this latter statement, and prose actually seems to usurp the place of verse, I believe that careful study of the passage will prove the supposed exception to be apparent rather than real.

Some Books for Teachers and Students. — A few out of the many books that might be commended to the teacher and the critical student are the following: Halliwell-Phillipps's *Outlines of the Life of Shakespeare* (7th ed. 1887); Sidney Lee's *Life of Shakespeare* (1898; for ordinary students the abridged ed. of 1899 is preferable); Schmidt's *Shakespeare Lexicon* (3d ed. 1902); Littledale's ed. of Dyce's *Glossary* (1902); Bartlett's *Concordance to Shakespeare* (1895); Abbott's *Shakespearian Grammar* (1873); Furness's "New Variorum," ed. of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (1895; encyclopædic and exhaustive); Dowden's *Shakspere: His Mind and Art* (American ed. 1881); Hudson's *Life, Art, and Characters of Shakespeare* (revised ed. 1882); Mrs. Jameson's *Characteristics of Women* (several eds., some with the title, *Shakespeare Heroines*); Ten Brink's *Five Lectures on Shakespeare* (1895); Boas's *Shakespeare and His Predecessors* (1895); Dyer's *Folk-lore of Shakespeare* (American ed. 1884); Gervinus's *Shakespeare Commentaries* (Bunnett's translation, 1875); Wordsworth's *Shakespeare's Knowledge of the Bible* (3d ed. 1880); Elson's *Shakespeare in Music* (1901).

Some of the above books will be useful to all readers who are interested in special subjects or in general criticism of Shakespeare. Among those which are better suited to the needs of ordinary readers and students, the following may be mentioned: Mabie's *William Shakespeare: Poet, Dramatist, and Man* (1900); Phin's

Cyclopædia and Glossary of Shakespeare (1902; more compact and cheaper than Dyce); Dowden's *Shakspere Primer* (1877; small but invaluable); Rolfe's *Shakespeare the Boy* (1896; treating of the home and school life, the games and sports, the manners, customs, and folk-lore of the poet's time); Guerber's *Myths of Greece and Rome* (for young students who may need information on mythological allusions not explained in the notes).

Black's *Judith Shakespeare* (1884; a novel, but a careful study of the scene and the time) is a book that I always commend to young people, and their elders will also enjoy it. The Lambs' *Tales from Shakespeare* is a classic for beginners in the study of the dramatist; and in Rolfe's ed. the plan of the authors is carried out in the Notes by copious illustrative quotations from the plays. Mrs. Cowden-Clarke's *Girlhood of Shakespeare's Heroines* (several eds.) will particularly interest girls; and both girls and boys will find Bennett's *Master Skylark* (1897) and Imogen Clark's *Will Shakespeare's Little Lad* (1897) equally entertaining and instructive.

H. Snowden Ward's *Shakespeare's Town and Times* (1896) and John Leyland's *Shakespeare Country* (1900) are copiously illustrated books (yet inexpensive) which may be particularly commended for school libraries.

It is proper to add that certain books specially useful in the study of other plays than the *M. N. D.* are not included in the above lists.

Abbreviations in the Notes. — The abbreviations of the names of Shakespeare's plays will be readily understood; as *T. N.* for *Twelfth Night*, *Cor.* for *Coriolanus*, 3 *Hen. VI.* for *The Third Part of King Henry the Sixth*, etc. *P. P.* refers to *The Passionate Pilgrim*; *V. and A.* to *Venus and Adonis*; *L. C.* to *Lover's Complaint*; and *Sonn.* to the *Sonnets*.

Other abbreviations that hardly need explanation are *Cf.* (*confer*, compare), *Fol.* (following), *Id.* (*idem*, the same), and *Prol.* (prologue). The numbers of the lines in the references (except for the present play) are those of the "Globe" edition (the cheapest and

best edition of *Shakespeare* in one compact volume), which is now generally accepted as the standard for line-numbers in works of reference (Schmidt's *Lexicon*, Abbott's *Grammar*, Dowden's *Primer*, the publications of the New Shakspere Society, etc.).

THE SOURCES OF THE PLAY IN CHAUCER, OVID, AND PLUTARCH. — Chaucer's *Knightes Tale* and the story of "Thisbe of Babylon" in his *Legende of Goode Women*, and Golding's translation of Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, were all well known to Shakespeare, and, as already stated (p. 16 above), furnished materials for this play.

The *Knightes Tale*, from which the poet drew very little, opens thus: —

"Whilom, as olde stories tellen us,
Ther was a duk that highte Theseus;
Of Athenes he was lord and governour,
And in his tyme swich a conquerour,
That gretter was ther non under the sonne.
Ful many a riche contré hadde he wonne;
That with his wisdam and his chivalrie
He conquered al the regne of Femynye,[1]
That whilom was i-cleped Cithea;
And weddede the queen Ipolita,
And brought hire hoom with him in his contré,
With moche glorie and gret solempnité,
And eek hire yonge suster Emelye.
And thus with victorie and with melodye
Lete I this noble duk to Athenes ryde,
And al his ost, in armes him biside.
And certes, if it nere to long to heere,
I wolde han told you fully the manere,
How wonnen was the regne of Femynye
By Theseus, and by his chivalrye;
And of the grete bataille for the nones
Bytwix Athenes and the Amazones;

[1] The kingdom of the Amazons. The name is formed from the Latin *femina*. In the next line *Cithea* = Scythia.

And how asegid[1] was Ypolita,
The faire hardy quyen of Cithea;
And of the feste that was at hire weddynge,
And of the tempest at hire hoom comynge;
But al that thing I most as now forbere."

Halliwell-Phillipps suggests that the following passage (*C. T.* 2961–2966) may have furnished Shakespeare with the idea of introducing an interlude into the play: —

"ne how the Grekes pleye
The wake-pleyes,[2] kepe I nat to seye;
Who wrastleth best naked, with oyle enoynt,
Ne who that bar him best in no disjoynt.
I wole not telle eek how that they ben goon
Home til Athenes whan the pley is doon."

There are many similarities between the tale of Pyramus and Thisbe as related in Golding's *Ovid* and Shakespeare's interlude. I give the former in full: —

"Within the towne (of whose huge walles so monstrous high and thicke,
The fame is given Semiramis for making them of bricke,)
Dwelt hard together two young folke in houses joynde so nere,
That under all one roofe well nie both twaine convayed were.
The name of him was *Pyramus*, and *Thisbe* called was she;
So faire a man in all the East was none alive as he,
Nor nere a woman, mayde, nor wife, in beautie like to her.
This neigh-brod bred acquaintance first, this neigh-brod first did ster
The secret sparkes: this neigh-brod first an entrance in did show
For love, to come to that to which it afterward did grow.
And if that right had taken place, they had beene man and wife;
But still their parents went about to let which (for their life)
They could not let. For both their hearts with equal flame did burne;
No man was privie to their thoughts. And for to serve their turne,
Instead of talke they used signes: the closlier they supprest

[1] Besieged.
[2] Wake-plays, or funeral games.

The fire of love, the fiercer still it raged in their brest.
The wall that parted house from house had riven therein a cranie,
Which shroonke at making of the wall: this fault not markt of anie
Of many hundred yeeres before (what doth not love espie?)
These lovers first of all found out, and made a way whereby
To talke together secretly, and through the same did go
Their loving whisprings very light and safely to and fro.
Now, as at one side *Pyramus*, and *Thisbe* on the tother,
Stood often drawing one of them the pleasant breath from other:
O thou envious wall (they sayed), why letst thou lovers thus;
What matter were it if that thou permitted both of us
In armes each other to embrace: or if thou think that this
Were over-much, yet mightest thou at least make roome to kisse.
And yet thou shalt not finde us churles: we thinke our selves in det,
For the same piece of curtesie, in vouching safe to let
Our sayings to our friendly eares thus freely come and go.
Thus having where they stood in vaine complained of their wo,
When night drew neare they bad adue, and ech gave kisses sweete,
Unto the parget on their side the which did never meete.
Next morning with her cheerefull light had driven the starres aside,
And Phœbus with his burning beames the dewie grasse had dride,
These lovers at their wonted place by fore-appointment met,
Where, after much complaint and mone they covenanted to get
Away from such as watched them, and in the evening late
To steale out of their father's house and eke the citie gate.
And to th' intent that in the fields they strayd not up and downe,
They did agree at Ninus Tombe to meet without the towne,
And tary underneath a tree that by the same did grow:
Which was a faire high mulberie with fruite as white as snow,
Hard by a coole and trickling spring. This bargaine pleased them both
And so day-light (which to their thought away but slowly goth)
Did in the ocian fall to rest, and night from thence did rise.
As soone as darkenesse once was come, straight *Thisbe* did devise
A shift to winde her out of doores, that none that were within
Perceived her: and muffling her with clothes about her chin,
That no man might discerne her face, to Ninus Tombe she came
Unto the tree: and set her downe there underneath the same.

Love made her bold. But see the chance; there comes besmerde
with blood
About the chappes, a lyonesse all foming from the wood,
From slaughter lately made of kine, to staunch her bloody thirst
With water of the foresaid spring. Whom Thisbe spying first,
Afarre by moone-light, thereupon with fearfull steps gan flie,
And in a darke and yrkesome cave did hide herselfe thereby.
And as she fled away for haste she let her mantle fall,
The which for feare she left behinde not looking backe at all.
Now when the cruell lyonesse her thirst had staunched well,
In going to the wood she found the slender weede that fell
From Thisbe, which with bloodie teeth in peeces he did teare:
The night was somewhat further spent ere Pyramus came there,
Who seeing in the suttle sand the print of lyon's paw,
Waxt pale for feare. But when also the bloodie cloke he saw
All rent and torne: one night (he sayed) shall lovers two confound,
Of which long life deserved she of all that live on ground;
My soule deserves of this mischaunce the perill for to beare.
I, wretch, have been the death of thee, which to this place of feare
Did cause thee in the night to come, and came not there before.
My wicked lims and wretched guts, with cruell teeth therefore,
Devoure ye, O ye lyons all, that in this rocke doe dwell.
But cowards use to wish for death. The slender weede that fell
From Thisbe up he takes, and straight doth beare it to the tree,
Which was appointed erst the place of meeting for to bee.
And when he had bewept, and kist the garment which he knew,
Receive thou my blood too (quoth he); and therewithall he drew
His sword, the which among his guts he thrust, and by and bie
Did draw it from the bleeding wound, beginning for to die,
And cast himselfe upon his backe; the blood did spinne on hie,
As when a conduite pipe is crackt, the water bursting out
Doth shote it selfe a great way off, and pierse the ayre about,
The leaves that were upon the tree besprinkled with his blood,
Were died black. The roote also bestained as it stood,
A deepe dark purple colour straight upon the berries cast.
Anon scarce ridded of her feare with which she was agast,
For doubt of disapoynting him comes *Thisbe* forth in hast,
And for her lover lookes about, rejoycing for to tell

How hardly she had scapt that night the danger that befell.
And as she knew right well the place and facion of the tree,
(As which she saw so late before:) even so when she did see
The colour of the berries turn'd, she was uncertaine whither
It were the tree at which they both agreed to meet togither.
While in this doubtfull stound she stood, she cast her eye aside,
And there beweltred in his blood hir lover she espide,
Lie sprawling with his dying lims: at which she started backe,
And looked pale as any box, a shuddring through her stracke,
Even like the sea which suddenly with whissing noyse doth move,
When with a little blast of wind it is but toucht above.
But when approching nearer him she knew it was her love,
She beate her brest, she shriked out, she tare her golden heares,
And taking him betweene her armes did wash his woundes with teares
She meynd her weeping with his blood, and kissing all his face,
(Which now became as cold as yse) she cryde in wofull case,
Alas, what chaunce my *Pyramus* hath parted thee and mee!
Make answere, O my *Pyramus;* it is thy *Thisb.* even shee
Whom thou doost love most hartily, that speaketh unto thee,
Give eare and raise thy heavie head. He hearing *Thisbes* name,
Lift up his dying eyes, and having seene her, closd the same.
But when she knew her mantle there, and saw his scaberd lie
Without the sworde: Unhappy man, thy love hath made thee die:
Thy love (she said) hath made thee slea thyselfe. This hand of mine
Is strong inough to doe the like. My love no lesse than thine
Shall give me force to worke my wound, I will pursue thee dead,
And wretched woman as I am, it shall of me be sed
That like as of thy death I was the onely cause and blame,
So am I thy companion eke and partner in the same.
For death which onely could alas! asunder part us twaine,
Shall never so dissever us but we will meete againe.
And you the parents of us both, most wretched folke alive,
Let this request that I shall make in both our names belive,
Intreate you to permit, that we whom chaste and stedfast love,
And whom even death hath joyned in one, may as it doth behove
In one grave be together layd. And thou, unhappie tree,
Which shouldest now the corse of one, and shalt anon through mee
Shroude two, of this same slaughter hold the sicker sinnes for ay,

Blacke be the colour of thy fruite and mourning like alway,
Such as the murder of us twaine may evermore bewray.
This said, she tooke the sword yet warme with slaughter of her love,
And setting it beneath her brest did to the heart it shove.
Her prayer with the Gods and with their parents tooke effect,
For when the fruite is thoroughly ripe, the berrie is bespect
With colour tending to a blacke. And that which after fire
Remained, rested in one tombe, as *Thisbe* did desire."

The "Life of Theseus" in North's *Plutarch* has also been mentioned as one of the sources from which Shakespeare drew some small part of his material. The only passages that can be cited as illustrating the play are the following: —

"And so going on further, in the straits of Peloponnesus he killed another [robber], called Sinnis, surnamed Pityocamtes, that is to say, a wreather or bower of pine-apple trees: whom he put to death in that self cruel manner that Sinnis had slain many other travellers before. . . . This Sinnis had a goodly fair daughter called Perigouna, which fled away when she saw her father slain; whom he followed and sought all about. But she had hidden herself in a grove full of certain kinds of wild pricking rushes called *stæbe*, and wild sperage, which she simply like a child intreated to hide her, as if they had heard, and had sense to understand her: promising them with an oath, that if they saved her from being found, she would never cut them down, nor burn them. But Theseus finding her, called her, and sware by his faith he would use her gently, and do her no hurt, nor displeasure at all. Upon which promise she came out of the bush, and bare unto him a goodly boy, which was called Menalippus. . . .

"Furthermore, after he was arrived in Creta, he slew there the Minotaur (as the most part of ancient authors do write) by the means and help of Ariadne: who being fallen in fancy with him did give him a clue of thread, by the help whereof she taught him, how he might easily wind out of the turnings and crancks of the labyrinth. . . . They report many other things also touching this

matter, and specially of Ariadne: but there is no troth nor certainty in it. For some say, that Ariadne hung herself for sorrow, when she saw that Theseus had cast her off. Others write, that she was transported by mariners into the ile of Naxos, where she was married unto Œnarus the priest of Bacchus; and they think that Theseus left her, because he was in love with another, as by these verses should appear: —

> "Ægles, the nymph, was loved of Theseus,
> Who was the daughter of Panopeus. . . .

"Touching the voyage he made by the sea Major, Philochorus, and some other hold opinion, that he went thither with Hercules against the Amazons: and that to honour his valiantness, Hercules gave him Antiopa the Amazon. But the more part of the other historiographers, namely, Hellanicus, Pherecides, and Herodotus, do write, that Theseus went thither alone, after Hercules' voyage, and that he took this Amazon prisoner: which is likeliest to be true. For we do not find that any other who went this journey with him, had taken any Amazon prisoner beside himself. Bion also the historiographer, this notwithstanding, saith, that he brought her away by deceit and stealth. For the Amazons (saith he) naturally loving men, did not fly at all when they saw them land in their country, but sent them presents, and that Theseus enticed her to come into his ship, who brought him a present: and so soon as she was aboard, he hoised his sail, and so carried her away. . . .

"Now, whether they [the Amazons] came by land from so far a country, or that they passed over an arm of the sea, which is called Bosphorus Cimmericus, being frozen as Hellanicus saith: it is hardly to be credited. But that they camped within the precinct of the very city itself, the names of the places which continue yet to this present day do witness it, and the graves also of the women which died there. But so it is, that both armies lay a great time one in the face of the other, ere they came to battle. Howbeit at the length Theseus, having first made sacrifice unto Fear the goddess,

according to the counsel of a prophecy he had received, he gave them battle in the month of August, on the same day in the which the Athenians do even at this present solemnise the feast which they call Boedromia. . . . Afterwards, at the end of four months, peace was taken between them by means of one of the women called Hippolyta. For this historiographer calleth the Amazon which Theseus married, Hippolyta, and not Antiopa."

ACT I

SCENE I.—4. *Lingers.* For the transitive use, cf. *Rich. II.* ii. 2. 72: —

> "Who gently would dissolve the bands of life,
> Which false hope lingers in extremity."

5. *Like to a stepdame,* etc. Whalley cites Horace, *Epist.* i. 1 21–23, which Drant (1567) translates thus: —

> "Slow seames the yeare unto the warde
> Which houlden downe must be,
> In custodie of stepdame straite, —
> Slowe slydes the time to me."

Dowager is here used in the original sense of a widow receiving dower out of the heir's estate. Slender (*M. W.* i. 1. 284) alludes to this custom: "I keep but three men and a boy yet, till my mother be dead."

6. *Withering out.* Steevens quotes Chapman's *Homer:* "there the goodly plant lies withering out his grace." *Revenue* is accented by S. either on the penult or antepenult. Cf. line 158 below.

7. *Steep.* For the verb similarly used, cf. *Cymb.* v. 4. 131, *Oth.* iv. 2. 50, *T. N.* iv. 1. 66, *A. and C.* ii. 7. 113, etc.

10. *New-bent.* Rowe's emendation for the "Now bent" of the early eds.

13. *Pert.* Lively. Used by S. only here and in *L. L. L.* v. 2. 272. Cf. *pertly* = promptly, in *Temp.* iv. 1. 58: "appear, and pertly."

15. *Companion.* Often used contemptuously, as *fellow* is now, and perhaps somewhat so here. Cf. *M. W.* iii. 1. 123: "this same scall, scurvy, cogging companion"; *J. C.* iv. 3. 138: "Companion, hence!" 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 132: "scurvy companion," etc. *Pomp* (as in 23 below) seems to be used (as Schmidt and Furness suggest) in the classic sense of a festive procession (Greek πομπή). Cf. *K. John*, ii. 1. 560, iii. 1. 304, *T. A.* i. 1. 176, etc.

16. *I woo'd thee with my sword.* See extracts from Chaucer and Plutarch above.

19. *Triumph.* "A public festivity or exhibition of any kind, particularly a tournament" (Schmidt). Cf. *T. G. of V.* iv. 4. 161: "With triumphs, mirth, and rare solemnity"; *Rich. II.* v. 2. 52: "justs and triumphs"; 3 *Hen. VI.* v. 7. 43: "With stately triumphs, mirthful comic shows," etc.

20. *Duke.* S. found the word in Chaucer and in North's *Plutarch;* and it is also used in 1 *Chronicles*, i. 51 in the same sense of leader (Latin *dux*) or ruler. Steevens cites Lydgate's *Fall of Princes*, xii. 21: "Duke Theseus had the victorye"; and Stanyhurst, in his translation of Virgil, calls Æneas "Duke Æneas."

21. *Egeus.* S. took the name from Plutarch, who gives it as that of the father of Theseus. The word is a trisyllable, with the accent on the penult.

24. *Stand forth, Demetrius.* These words, like "Stand forth, Lysander," two lines below, are given as a stage-direction in all the early eds. The measure shows that they belong in the text.

31. *Feigning.* The early eds. have "faining" in both places, and Furness prefers that reading, taking *faining* in the obsolete sense of "loving, longing." He says that there was "nothing false or feigned in Lysander's love." But Egeus might call it so here. Besides *faining* is an old spelling of *feigning*, still preserved in the derivative *faint.*

32. *Stolen*, etc. Secretly gained a hold upon her affections.

33. *Gawds*. Baubles, toys. Cf. iv. 1. 167 below. See also *T. of S.* ii. 1. 3 and *T. and C.* iii. 3. 176.

34. *Knacks*. Knick-knacks. Cf. *T. of S.* iv. 3. 167: "A knack, a toy, a trick, a baby's cap"; *W. T.* iv. 4. 360: "To load my she with knacks," etc.

35. *Unharden'd*. Susceptible, impressible; perhaps suggested by the figure in *impression* (as if on wax) above (Furness).

44. *Our law*. S. assumes that in the time of Theseus the father had this absolute power over the child.

45. *Immediately*. Expressly, specially (Schmidt).

46. *Be advis'd*. Take heed, consider well; as often. Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 368, *M. of V.* ii. 1. 42, *Hen. VIII.* i. 1. 139, 145, etc.

54. *In this kind*. Cf. v. 1. 88 and 211 below.

65. *To die the death*. Cf. *M. for M.* ii. 4. 165, *A. and C.* iv. 14. 26, *Cymb.* iv. 2. 96, etc. See also *Matthew*, xv. 4.

69. *Whether*. Metrically a monosyllable; as often. It is sometimes printed "where" or "whe'r" in the early eds.

70. *Nun*. For the anachronism, cf. *V. and A.* 752: "Love-lacking vestals and self-loving nuns."

71. *Mew'd*. Shut up. Cf. *Rich. III.* i. 1. 132:—

> "More pity that the eagle should be mew'd,
> While kites and buzzards prey at liberty."

Mew originally meant to moult, or shed the feathers; and as a noun, "the place, whether it be abroad or in the house, in which the hawk is put during the time she casts, or doth change her feathers" (R. Holmes's *Academy of Armory*). Spenser has both verb and noun; as in *F. Q.* i. 5. 20:—

> "forth comming from her darksome mew,
> Where she all day did hide her hated hew;"

Id. ii. 3. 34:—

> "Unto the bush her eye did suddein glaunce,
> In which vain Braggadocchio was mewd."

Milton uses the verb in the magnificent description of Liberty in *Of Unlicensed Printing:* "Methinks I see her as an eagle mewing her mighty youth, and kindling her undazzled eyes at the full midday beam." In England the noun is still used in the plural to denote a stable for horses. According to Pennant (*London*), the royal stables in London were called *mews* from the original use of the buildings for keeping the king's falcons.

73. *Faint.* With little feeling or fervour. Cf. *T. of A.* iii. 1. 57: "Has friendship such a faint and milky heart," etc.

75. *Pilgrimage.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 138 and *Genesis*, xlvii. 9.

76. *Earthlier happy.* More earthly happy; or happier from a worldly point of view, as distinguished from the religious or monastic. Steevens quotes Lyly's *Midas* (1592): "You bee all young and faire, endeavour to bee wise and vertuous; that when, like roses, you shall fall from the stalke, you may be gathered, and put to the still." Malone refers to *Sonn.* 5. 13 and 54. 3–12.

81. *Unto his lordship whose unwished yoke*, etc. Unto the marital authority of him to whose, etc. Many eds. wrongly insert a comma after *lordship*. A preposition in the leading sentence is often thus omitted (like *to* here) in a relative clause.

92. *Crazed title.* Such as only a madman would presume to claim.

98. *Estate.* Used by S. as a verb elsewhere only in *Temp.* iv. 1. 85 (followed by *on*) and in *A. Y. L.* v. 2. 13 (followed by *upon*).

100. *As well possess'd.* As rich. Passive participles are not infrequently thus used in an active sense. Cf. *M. of V.* ii. 2. 205, *Rich. II.* ii. 4. 11, etc. We still use *well-behaved.*

102. *If not with vantage.* If not superior to his. Cf. *R. of L.* 249: "Urging the worser sense for vantage still" (that is, "placing it in a more advantageous light").

110. *Spotted.* "As *spotless* is innocent, so *spotted* is wicked" (Johnson). Cf. Cavendish, *Metrical Visions:* "the spotted queen, causer of all this strife."

113. *Self-affairs.* My own business. *Self* is often an adjective in S. Cf. *C. of E.* v. 1. 10, *T. N.* i. 1. 39, etc.

116. *Schooling.* Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* iii. 1. 190: "Well, I am school'd."

123. *Go along.* Here (as in *T. of S.* iv. 5. 9, 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 1. 191, etc.) *go* is used where we should say *come.*

124. *Business.* A trisyllable; as it must have been originally pronounced. Cf. *Rich. II.* ii. 1. 217, *J. C.* iv. 1. 22, etc.

125. *Nuptial.* S. regularly uses the singular, though the plural is found in *Per.* v. 3. 80. In *Oth.* ii. 2. 8 the quartos have *nuptials,* the folios *nuptial;* and in *Temp.* v. 1. 308, *nuptial* is found in the later folios, as it is in the present passage and in v. 1. 75 below.

126. *Nearly that concerns.* That nearly concerns.

129. *How chance.* How does it chance that? Cf. v. 1. 313 below: "How chance Moonshine," etc. See also *M. W.* v. 5. 230, *C. of E.* i. 2. 42, *Lear,* ii. 4. 64, etc.

130. *Belike.* "As it seems, I suppose" (Schmidt). It is followed by *that* in *T. G. of V.* ii. 4. 90: "Belike that now she hath enfranchis'd them," etc.

131. *Beteem.* "Pour down upon" (Pope), or "bestow upon" (Johnson); used by S. only here and in *Ham.* i. 2. 141. Cf. Spenser, *F. Q.* ii. 8. 19:—

> "So would I (said th' enchaunter) glad and faine
> Beteeme to you this sword, you to defend."

132. *Ay me!* Here, as elsewhere, many eds. print "Ah me!" a phrase which is found in the early eds. only in *R. and J.* v. i. 10. "Ay me!" occurs frequently in the plays; as it does in Milton (*Lycidas,* 56, 154, *Comus,* 511, *P. L.* iv. 86, etc.).

134. *The course of true love,* etc. This passage appears to have been imitated by Milton in *P. L.* x. 896–908.

136. *Too high,* etc. That one of too high rank should be enslaved by love for one of low degree. The early eds. have "loue" (love) for *low,* which Theobald corrected. Cf. *V. and A.* 1139.

137. *Misgraffed.* Misgrafted; used by S. nowhere else.

139. *Of friends.* The quarto reading; the folios have "of

merit," which White retained in his 1st ed. (changed to *friends* in the 2d) on the ground that it could not have been accidentally substituted for "friends." Furness also prefers "merit."

143. *Momentany.* The quarto reading; the folios have "momentary," which S. elsewhere uses. *Momentany* is from the Latin *momentaneus*, as *momentary* is from *momentarius*. It is used by Bacon, Hooker, and other writers of the time, and was not wholly obsolete in Dryden's day.

144. *Swift as a shadow*, etc. Cf. *Job*, viii. 9, xx. 8. Furness cites *R. and J.* ii. 5. 4.

145. *Collied.* Blackened, darkened; literally, smutted with *coal*. Cf. *collier* and *colliery*. S. uses the word only here and in *Oth.* ii. 3. 206.

146. *Spleen.* Often used by S. to express any sudden impulse; as of laughter (*M. for M.* ii. 2. 122; *L. L. L.* iii. 1. 77, etc.), of passion (1 *Hen. IV.* v. 2. 19, *J. C.* iv. 3. 47, etc.), of caprice (*V. and A.* 907, *T. of S.* iii. 2. 10, etc.), and the like.

147. *Ere a man*, etc. Cf. *R. and J.* ii. 2. 119:—

> "Too like the lightning that doth cease to be
> Ere one can say 'It lightens.'"

149. *Confusion.* Ruin, destruction; as in *Macb.* ii. 3. 71, iii. 5. 29, etc. The word is here a quadrisyllable. Cf. *patience* (trisyllable) three lines below; also in iv. 1. 58.

151. *Edict.* Accented on the last syllable, as in 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 258, *L. L. L.* i. 1. 11, etc. Elsewhere (as in *Rich. III.* i. 4. 203, 1 *Hen. IV.* iv. 3. 79, etc.) it has the modern accent.

154. *Due.* Naturally pertaining, belonging. Cf. *Macb.* iv. 3. 197: "a fee-grief, due to some single breast," etc.

155. *Fancy's.* Love's. Cf. iv. 1. 163 below; also *M. of V.* iii. 2. 63, 68, 70, etc. So *fancy-free* (ii. 1. 161) = free from the power of love, and *fancy-sick* (iii. 2. 96) = lovesick. In the extract from North's *Plutarch*, p. 132 above, "fallen in fancy" = fallen in love.

156. *A good persuasion.* "Well urged" (*J. C.* ii. 1. 155). Lysander approves her reasoning and is *persuaded* by it.

157. *Dowager.* See on 5 above; and for the accent of *revenue* in next line, on 6 above.

160. *Respects.* Considers, regards. Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* v. 4. 20: "I do respect thee as my soul," etc. So we have *respecting* where we should use *considering*, in 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 1. 24: "Respecting what a rancorous mind he bears," etc.

165. *Without the town.* Outside the town; as in i. 2. 97 below. See also iv. 1. 153: "Without the peril of the Athenian law"; where it may have the same sense.

167. *To do observance*, etc. Cf. Chaucer, *Troilus and Creseide*, ii. 112: "And let us done to May some observaunce"; also Turbervile's *Poems*, 1570: —

> "You that in May have bathde in blis,
> And founde a salve to ease your sore,
> Doe May observaunce, reason is
> That May should honorde be therfore."

170. *His best arrow*, etc. An allusion to the two arrows mentioned in Ovid, *Met.* i. 466; the one that causes love being, to quote Golding's translation, "all of gold, with point full sharp and bright." Cf. *The King's Quair:* "And with the first that headed is of gold, he smites soft, and that has easy cure"; and Sidney's *Arcadia:* "But arrowes two, and tipt with gold or lead."

171. *Simplicity.* Artlessness, innocence. Cf. v. i. 104 below.

173. *The Carthage queen.* Such anachronisms as the introduction of Dido and English May-day customs need no comment. On the use of *Carthage*, cf. *J. C.* v. 5. 19: "Philippi fields"; *Id.* i. 1. 63: "Tiber banks," etc.

174. *Troyan.* Often found instead of "Troian" (Trojan) in the early eds.

180. *Whither away?* Where are you going? Cf. *T. G. of V.* iii. 1. 51, *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 186, *Hen. VIII.* ii. 1. 1, etc.

182. *Your fair.* S. often uses *fair* as a noun = beauty. See *V. and A.* 1083, 1086, *Sonn.* 16. 11, *C. of E.* ii. 1. 98, *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 99, etc.

183. *Lode-stars.* The preferable orthography. Cf. *R. of L.* 179: "Which must be lode-star to his lustful eye." Johnson quotes Milton, *L'Allegro*, 80:—

> "Where perhaps some beauty lies,
> The cynosure of neighbouring eyes."

Many other instances of the figure might be added.

186. *Favour.* Features, outward appearance; as often in S. Cf. *Macb.* i. 5. 73, *M. for M.* iv. 2. 34, 185, etc.

188. *My ear should catch your voice.* That is, that my *tongue* might imitate it; the idea being repeated in the next line. The passage seems to have been written carelessly and never revised. The critics have wasted much ink upon it, and have made bad attempts to emend it.

190. *Bated.* Excepted. Cf. *Ham.* v. 2. 23: "no leisure bated," etc.

191. *Translated.* Transformed, changed. Cf. *Sonn.* 96. 8:—

> "So are those errors that in thee are seen,
> To truths translated and for true things deem'd.
> How many lambs might the stern wolf betray,
> If like a lamb he could his looks translate!"

See also iii. 1. 117 and iii. 2. 32 below.

194–201. *I frown upon him*, etc. This part of the dialogue is an instance of *stichomythia*, as the Greek rhetoricians called it. Cf. 1 *Hen. VI.* iv. 5. 34–42, 3 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 24–33, 36–59, *Rich. III.* iv. 4. 212–218, 343–361, etc. It occurs several times in the *C. of E.*

206. *What graces*, etc. Uttered bitterly, as if she said, "Alas that he whom I love, and all whose influence should be only gracious, has thus turned that paradise into a hell!" The critics who comment upon the passage appear to have misunderstood it.

209. *Phœbe.* Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 39: "A title to Phœbe, to Luna, to the moon."

211. *Decking*, etc. Cf. ii. 1. 14: —

> "I must go seek some dewdrops here,
> And hang a pearl in every cowslip's ear."

See also iv. i. 54.

212. *Still.* Constantly; as very often.

215. *Faint.* "Whether the epithet *faint* has reference to the colour or smell of primroses, let the reader determine" (Steevens).

216. *Sweet.* All the early eds. have "sweld," and in 219 "strange companions." Theobald substituted *sweet* and *stranger companies* for the rhyme, and has been generally followed.

223. *Midnight.* As Blackstone has pointed out, this is inconsistent with 209, 210 above. It appears from lines 2, 3 that "to-morrow night would be within three nights of the new moon, when there is no moonshine at all, much less at deep midnight."

226. *Other some.* Cf. *Acts*, xvii. 18. It was sometimes printed as one word; as in *Gaulfrido and Barnardo*, 1570: "To othersome as kinde." *Happy* = fortunate.

232. *Holding no quantity.* "Bearing no proportion to what they are estimated at by love" (Schmidt). Cf. *Ham.* iii. 2. 177: "For women's fear and love holds quantity" (that is, have the same proportion). Green (*Emblem Writers*, quoted by Furness) finds a parallel to this passage in an emblem (1596) illustrating the idea that *time* refines and strengthens love, the accompanying cut representing a bear licking her cub into shape. It seems to me that the "parallel" is only in Green's imagination. In the play the reference is simply to the fact that love often overestimates the object of its passion; *not* to the gradual development of love by time — the finding new charms and attractions in the loved one not seen or suspected at first.

235. *Cupid painted blind.* This is a modern idea, no trace of it being found in the old Greek or Latin poets. Douce says that the

earliest English writer who gives it is Chaucer, in his translation of the *Roman de la Rose:* "The god of love, blind as stone"; but the line is not in the French original.

237. *Unheedy.* Unheeding; used by S. nowhere else. *Unheedful* occurs in *T. G. of V.* ii. 6. 11 and 1 *Hen. VI.* iv. 4. 7.

242. *Eyne.* Sometimes written *eyen;* a plural analogous to *oxen, children, brethren, shoon,* etc. Cf. ii. 2. 99, iii. 2. 138, and v. 1. 177 below; also *V. and A.* 633, *R. of L.* 643, *L. L. L.* v. 2. 206, etc. It is used *without rhyme* in *R. of L.* 1229 and *Per.* iii. prol. 5.

249. *A dear expense.* A costly sacrifice on my part. Steevens explains it: "It will cost him much (be a severe constraint on his feelings) to make even so slight a return for my communication."

250. *But herein,* etc. But I seek to repay myself for my pains by having the sight of Demetrius, etc.

Scene II. — Halliwell-Phillipps remarks that there is a connection between the name of *Bottom* and his trade, a ball of thread wound on a cylindrical body being called "a bottom of thread." He quotes *Nomenclator,* 1585: "*Glomus,* a bottome of yarne, or a clew of threed"; and Grange's *Garden,* 1577: —

> "A bottome for your silke it seemes,
> My letters are become,
> Whiche, with oft winding off and on,
> Are wasted whole and some."

S. uses the word in this sense in *T. of S.* iv. 3. 138: "beat me to death with a bottom of brown thread."

2. *You were best.* It were best for you. The *you* was originally dative, but came to be regarded as nominative. By *generally* Bottom of course means individually.

3. *Scrip.* Written list. In the only other instance in which S. uses the word (*A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 171) it means a bag or wallet.

10. *Grow to a point.* Come to a conclusion. Cf. *The Arraignment of Paris,* 1584: —

"Our reasons will be infinite, I trow,
Unless unto some other point we grow."

11. *Marry.* A corruption of *Mary*, and originally a mode of swearing by the Virgin; but this was forgotten in the time of S.

The most lamentable comedy, etc. Steevens says that this is very probably a burlesque on the title-page of Thomas Preston's *Cambyses:* "A lamentable Tragedie, mixed full of pleasant Mirth, conteyning, the Life of Cambises King of Percia," etc.

13. *A very good piece of work.* Cf. *T. of S.* i. 1. 258: "'Tis a very excellent piece of work." Verplanck remarks: "Bottom and Sly both speak of the play as they would of a piece of cloth or a pair of shoes."

24. *Ask.* Require. Cf. *T. of S.* ii. 1. 115: "my business asketh haste," etc.

26. *Condole.* Lament, bewail; used by S. only in this speech and in that of Pistol in *Hen. V.* ii. 1. 133: "Let us condole the knight."

28. *Ercles.* Hercules. This may perhaps be an allusion to Martin Slaughter's play of *Hercules*, now lost, but written about 1594; or it may refer to a "mask of Greek Worthyes" of the time of Edward VI., in a list of properties for which we find the following entry: "a great clobb for one of them representing Hercules, iiij. *s.*" It is difficult to say whether the verses which Bottom uses are an actual quotation or a burlesque, but probably the latter.

A part to tear a cat in. Probably a burlesque of Hercules's killing a lion. Steevens cites the old comedy of *The Roaring Girl*, in which there is a character called *Tear-cat*, who says: "I am called, by those who have seen my valour, *Tear-cat.*"

29. *To make all split* was a common phrase, perhaps originally a naval one. Cf. Beaumont and Fletcher, *Wild-Goose Chase:* "I love a sea-voyage, and a blustring tempest, and let all split"; Taylor, the Water-Poet, *Workes:* "Some ships beare so great a sayle, that they beare their masts by the boord and make all split againe";

Greene, *Never too Late:* "as the Marriners say, a man would have thought al would have split againe," etc.

36. *Make and mar.* A common phrase in that day. Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 191, *A. Y. L.* i. 1. 34, *T. of S.* iv. 3. 97, *Rich. III.* i. 3. 165, etc.

41. *Bellows-mender.* According to Steevens, one who repaired the bellows of organs, etc.; but in the illustrative passage he quotes from Ben Jonson the *bellows* are "of the ordinary domestic kind" (Furness).

46. *Let me not play a woman,* etc. "This passage shows how the want of women on the old stage was supplied. If they had not a young man who could perform the part with a face that might pass for feminine, the character was acted in a mask, which was at that time a part of a lady's dress so much in use that it did not give any unusual appearance to the scene; and he that could modulate his voice in a female tone might play the woman very successfully" (Johnson). Coryat, in his *Crudities* (1611), writing of Venice, says: "here I observed certaine things that I never saw before, for I saw women acte, a thing that I never saw before, though I have heard that it hath beene sometimes used in London; and they performed it with as good a grace, action, gesture, and whatsoever convenient for a player, as ever I saw any masculine actor." The appearance of female actors was certainly rare on the English stage before the accession of Charles II. Pepys, in his *Diary*, among other references to the subject, writes (Jan. 3, 1660): "To the Theatre, where was acted 'Beggar's Bush,' it being very well done; and here the first time that ever I saw women come upon the stage."

49. *As small as you will.* Cf. *M. W.* i. 1. 49: "She has brown hair, and speaks small like a woman"; Chaucer, *The Floure and the Leafe:*—

> "With voice sweet entuned, and so small
> That me thought it the sweetest melody";

Fairfax, *Godfrey of Bulloigne:* "She warbled forth a treble small," etc. See also *T. N.* i. 4. 32 and *Cor.* iii. 2. 114.

51. *Thisne, Thisne.* The Cambridge editors think "it may be questioned whether the true reading is not 'thisne, thisne'; that is, 'in this manner,' a meaning which 'thissen' has in several dialects"; but *thisne* is an improbable misprint for *thissen*, and the repetition is against its being that word. It seems more likely to indicate Bottom's attempt to say *Thisbe* in "a monstrous little voice," in spite of the fact that he doesn't keep it up in the rest of the speech. Elsewhere S. fails to maintain consistency in provincial speech and that of foreigners using English — in *M. W.* and *Hen. V.*, for instance. In the present passage, however, there may be some corruption of the text.

59. *Thisby's mother.* For this and other characters mentioned below that do not appear in the clowns' play, see on p. 23 above.

64. *A play fitted.* Cf. v. 1. 65: "There is not one word apt, one player fitted"; *T. of S.* ind. i. 87: —

> "but sure, that part
> Was aptly fitted and naturally perform'd."

69. *I will roar, that.* The omission of *so* before *that* is common.

76. *Every mother's son.* As Halliwell-Phillipps shows, a phrase of great antiquity. He cites the *Thornton MS.* in Lincoln Cathedral (15th century): "And he and his oste . . . slewe thame ilke a moder sone"; also *MS. Cantab.* v. 48: —

> "Thryes throw at them he ran,
> Then forsothe as I yow sey,
> And woundyt many a modur sone,
> And xij. he slew that day."

81. *An 't were.* Cf. *T. and C.* i. 2. 189: "He will weep you an 't were a man born in April."

83. *Sweet-faced.* Cf. *C. of E.* v. 1. 418: "a sweet-faced youth."

84. *See in a summer's day.* A common phrase. Cf. Sidney, *Arcadia:* "a tricke and bonny lasse, as in a sommer day a man might see"; Lyly, *Mother Bombie:* "as goodly a youth as one shall see in a summer's day"; *Gratiæ Ludentes*, 1638: "One walk

ing abroad in a cleare moone-shining night, said it was as fine a night as any is in England. Another swore it was as fine a night as a man shall see in a summer's day," etc.

86. *What beard*, etc. It was the custom at that time to dye the beard. Steevens quotes the old comedy of *Ram-Alley*, 1611: —

> "What colour'd beard comes next by the window? . . .
> I think, a red: for that is most in fashion;"

also Jonson, *The Silent Woman*: "I have fitted my divine and canonist, dyed their beards and all."

89. *Discharge*. Perform. Cf. *Temp.* iii. 1. 22, etc.

90. *Orange-tawny*. Cf. iii. 1. 124 below. *Purple-in-grain* = purple dyed in grain. Marsh (*Lect. on Eng. Lang.*) shows that *grain* originally meant the dye *kermes*, obtained from the coccus insect; but as this sense grew less familiar, and the word came to be used chiefly as expressive of *fastness* of colour, an idea which was associated with dyeing *in the wool* or other raw material, *dyed in grain* got this latter meaning. Cf. Cotgrave, *Fr. Dict.*: "Graine: . . . graine wherewith cloth is dyed in graine; Scarlet dye, Scarlet in graine."

101. *Properties*. Stage requisites; still used in the same sense. Cf. *M. W.* iv. 4. 78: —

> "Go get us properties
> And tricking for our fairies."

We have a curious list of ancient properties in *The Antipodes*, a comedy by R. Brome, 1640: —

> "He has got into our tyring-house amongst us,
> And tane a strict survey of all our properties;
> Our statues and our images of gods,
> Our planets and our constellations,
> Our giants, monsters, furies, beasts, and bugbeares,
> Our helmets, shields and vizors, haires and beards,
> Our pastbord marchpaines, and our wooden pies."

104. *Obscenely.* Probably used for *obscurely.* If Bottom, like Mrs. Malaprop, "reprehends anything in this world, it is the use of his oracular tongue, and a nice derangement of epitaphs."

107. *Hold or cut bow-strings.* That is, whatever may happen. The origin of the phrase is uncertain, but it seems to belong to archery. Cf. *Much Ado*, iii. 2. 11: "he hath twice or thrice cut Cupid's bow-string, and the little hangman dare not shoot at him."

ACT II

SCENE I. — For the trochaic metre of the opening lines, see p. 123 above.

3. *Thorough.* The reading of 1st quarto; the other early eds. have "Through." The words are the same, and S. uses either as suits the measure; and so with the derivatives, *thoroughly* and *throughly*, *thoroughfares* and *throughfares*, etc. This passage is imitated in *The Pranks of Puck*, which was quite certainly written after the play: —

> "If any wanderers I meet
> That from their night-sport do trudge home,
> With counterfeited voice I greet,
> And call them on with me to roam:
> Through woods, through lakes,
> Through bogs, through brakes,
> O'er bush and brier with them I go;
> I call upon
> Them to come on,
> And slide out laughing, ho, ho, ho!"

also in Drayton's *Nymphidia*: —

> "Quoth Puck, — My liege, I'll never lin [stop],
> But I will thorough thick and thin,
> Until at length I bring her in;
> My dearest lord, ne'er doubt it.

Thorough brake, thorough brier,
Thorough muck, thorough mier,
Thorough water, thorough fier! —
And thus goes Puck about it."

7. *Moon's sphere.* Steevens prints "moones," and compares Spenser, *F. Q.* iii. 1. 15: "And eke, through feare, as white as *whales* bone." He might have added *L. L. L.* v. 2. 332: "To show his teeth as white as whales bone." But *moon's* may be metrically a dissyllable. The *sphere* is the hollow crystalline sphere of the Ptolemaic astronomy, in which the moon was supposed to be fixed. Cf. iii. 2. 61 below.

9. *To dew.* For the verb, cf. *V. and A.* 66, *Macb.* v. 2. 30, *R. and J.* v. 3, 14, etc. The *orbs* are the "fairy-rings" so called, which were supposed to be formed by the fairies dancing in a circle. Cf. 86 below.

10. *Tall.* The cowslips would be tall to beings so diminutive that they could "creep into acorn cups and hide them there."

Pensioners. S. uses the word only here and in *M. W.* ii. 2. 79. In both places there is an allusion to Queen Elizabeth's band of military courtiers called *pensioners.* They were the handsomest and tallest young men of good family that could be found.

11. *In their gold coats,* etc. Cf. *Cymb.* ii. 2. 38: —

"A mole cinque-spotted, like the crimson drops
I' the bottom of a cowslip."

There is an allusion to the splendid dresses of the pensioners, their coats adorned with gold and jewels; as in Milton, *Il Penseroso,* 6: —

"And fancies fond with gaudy shapes possess,
As thick and numberless
As the gay motes that people the sun-beams;
Or likest hovering dreams,
The fickle pensioners of Morpheus' train."

13. *Freckles.* Used by S. nowhere else. He has *freckled* in *Temp.* i. 2. 283 and *Hen. V.* v. 2. 49; in the latter place applied to the cowslip.

15. *And hang a pearl*, etc. Steevens quotes the old comedy of *The Wisdome of Doctor Dodypoll*, known to have been written as early as 1596 (but after the present play): —

> "'T was I that led you through the painted meades,
> Where the light fairies daunst upon the flowers,
> Hanging on every leaf an orient pearle."

Cf. i. 1. 211 above and iv. 1. 54 below.

16. *Lob.* Lubber; quite certainly suggested by the size of Puck as compared with the fairies that could hide themselves in acorn cups. The general idea of a *lubber* was a heavy, clumsy, unwieldy fellow. No epithet associated with the word is more common than *great* or *big*. Cf. Milton's description of Robin Goodfellow, *L'Allegro*, 110: "Then lies him down the lubbar fiend"; but this *lubber* is so active that in one night he does the threshing "that ten day-labourers could not end." The critics dwell overmuch on the dulness and stupidity that have become more prominent in the modern meaning of the word. So *Hobgoblin*, which originally suggested mischief rather than malice, came to imply more of the latter, and therefore something frightful.

20. *Passing fell and wrath.* Exceeding fierce and wrathful. Cf. *T. and C.* iv. 5. 269: "fell as death," etc. S. does not elsewhere use *wrath* as an adjective; nor does he use *wroth* = wrathful (*wroth* = ruth, misery, occurs in *M. of V.* ii. 9. 78).

22. *Stolen from an Indian king.* Halliwell-Phillipps remarks that this is not very easily reconcilable with Titania's own account of the boy's mother in lines 123–134 below.

23. *Changeling.* It was a common superstition that fairies stole beautiful children, leaving elves in their place. Cf. Spenser, *F. Q.* i. 10. 65: —

"From thence a Faery thee unweeting reft,
There as thou slepst in tender swadling band;
And her base Elfin brood there for thee left:
Such, men do Chaungelings call, so chaung'd by Faeries theft."

See also *The Pranks of Puck*, quoted on 3 above: —

"When larks gin sing
Away we fling,
And babes new-born steal as we go;
An elf instead
Leave we in bed,
And wind out laughing, ho, ho, ho!"

and Drayton, *Nymphidia*: —

"These when a child haps to be got,
Which after proves an idiot,
When folk perceive it thriveth not,
The fault therein to smother,
Some silly doting brainless calf,
That understands things by the half,
Says that the Fairy left this aulf,
And took away the other."

See also *W. T.* iii. 3. 122, where the shepherd takes the foundling princess to be a changeling, on account of the "fairy gold," as he regards it, which is left with her. *Changeling* in the present passage is a trisyllable.

25. *Trace.* Pace; perhaps, as Furness thinks, "with an intimation of hunting or tracing the tracks of game." Cf. *Much Ado*, iii. 1. 16: "As we do trace this alley up and down."

26. *Perforce.* By force; as in *C. of E.* iv. 3. 95, v. 1. 117, *Rich. II.* ii. 3. 121, etc. It is = of necessity, in iii. 2. 90 below; as in 2 *Hen. IV.* i. 1. 165, iii. 1. 105, etc.

29. *Spangled starlight sheen.* Cf. *T. of S.* iv. 5. 31: "What stars do spangle heaven with such beauty," etc. *Sheen* is used by S. only here and in *Ham.* iii. 2. 167, where also it is a rhyming word.

30. *Square.* Quarrel. Cf. *T. A.* ii. 1. 100: —

> " are you such fools
> To square for this? "

See also *A. and C.* ii. 1. 45, iii. 3. 41, etc. *Squarer* = quarreller, in *Much Ado*, i. 1. 82.

33. *Shrewd.* Mischievous. This is the original sense of the word, which hence came to mean evil, wicked. Cf. Chaucer, *Tale of Melibœus:* "The prophete saith: Flee shrewdnesse, and do goodnesse."

35. *Villagery.* Villages; used by S. only here.

36. *Sometimes.* Two lines below we have *sometime.* S. used either as suited his ear. *Quern* = a hand-mill for grinding corn. Burton (*Anat. of Melancholy*, i. 2) says: "A bigger kind there is of them [fairies], called with us Hobgoblins and Robin Goodfellows, that would, in those superstitious times, grind corn for a mess of milk," etc. Cf. *The Pranks of Puck*, quoted above: —

> " Yet now and then, the maids to please,
> I card, at midnight, up their wool;
> And while they sleep, and take their ease,
> With wheel to thread their flax I pull;
> I grind at mill
> Their malt up still,
> I dress their hemp, I spin their tow;
> If any wake,
> And would me take,
> I wend me laughing, ho, ho, ho! "

37. *Bootless.* Bootlessly, to no purpose. Adjectives are often used adverbially by S.

38. *Barm.* Frothy head; showing that the beer had "worked" or fermented properly. Harsenet, in his *Declaration of Popish Impostures* (1603), says: "And if that the bowle of curds and creame were not duly set out for Robin Good-fellow, the frier, and Sisse the dairy-maid, why then either the pottage was burnt next

day in the pot, or the cheeses would not curdle, or the butter would not come, or the ale in the fat [vat] never would have good head." Halliwell-Phillipps quotes Lyly's *Mother Bombie:* "It behoveth my wits to worke like barme, alias yeast, alias sizing, alias rising, alias godsgood." He adds: "This provincial term is still in use in Warwickshire, and in 1847 I observed a card advertising 'fresh barm' in Henley Street, at Stratford-on-Avon, within a few yards of the poet's birthplace."

39. *Mislead night-wanderers.* See quotation in note on 3 above. Cf. Drayton, *Nymphidia:*—

> "This Puck seems but a dreaming dolt,
> Still walking like a ragged colt,
> And oft out of a bush doth bolt,
> Of purpose to deceive us:
> And leading us makes us to stray
> Long winter's nights out of the way
> And when we stick in mire and clay,
> He doth with laughter leave us."

Milton seems to have had this line in mind in *P. L.* ix. 640: "Misleads the amaz'd night-wanderer from his way," etc.

40. *Hobgoblin.* Halliwell-Phillipps quotes the following from *MS. Harl.* 6482:—

> "*Of spirits called Hobgoblins, or Robin Goodfellowes.*
>
> "These kinde of spirits are more familiar and domestical then the others, and for some causes to us unknown, abode in one place more then in another, so that some never almost depart from some particular houses, as though they were their proper mansions, making in them sundry noises, rumours, mockeries, gawds, and jests, without doing any harme at all, and some have heard them play at gitterns and Jews' harps, and ring bells, and make answer to those that call them, and speake with certain signes, laughters, and merry gestures, so that those of the house come at last to be so familiar and well acquainted with them that they fear them not at all. But

in truth, if they had free power to put in execution their mallicious desire, we should finde these pranks of theirs not to be jests, but earnest indeed, tending to the destruction both of our body and soul, but their power is so restrained and tyed that they can passe no further then to jests and gawds, and if they do any harm at all, it is certainly very little, as by experience hath been founde."

Sweet Puck. Tyrwhitt remarks that the epithet is by no means superfluous, as *Puck* signified nothing better than *fiend* or *devil.* The author of *Piers Ploughman* puts "the pouk" for the devil. Cf. Spenser, *Epithalamion*, 341: —

> "Ne let the Pouke, nor other evill sprights,
> Ne let mischivous witches with theyr charmes,
> Ne let hob Goblins, names whose sence we see not
> Fray us with things that be not."

42. *Thou speak'st aright*, etc. Verses with four accents, where there is a change of speakers, are not uncommon.

48. *Crab.* A crab-apple; as in *Temp.* ii. 2. 171, *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 6, v. 2. 935, etc. Steevens quotes the anonymous play of *King Henry V.* (1598): —

> "Yet we will have in store a crab in the fire,
> With nut-brown ale, that is full stale."

In Sumner's *Last Will and Testament* (1600), Christmas is described as —

> "sitting in a corner, turning crabs,
> Or coughing o'er a warmed pot of ale."

54. *Tailor cries.* Johnson says: "The custom of crying *tailor* at a sudden fall backwards, I think I remember to have observed. He that slips beside his chair falls as a tailor squats upon his board"; but no confirmation of this has been discovered. Halliwell-Phillipps thinks that the expression is "probably one of contempt, equivalent to *thief*"; and he cites *Pasquil's Night-Cap* (1612): —

> "Thieving is now an occupation made,
> Though men the name of *tailor* doe it give."

55. *Hold their hips*, etc. Cf. Milton, *L'Allegro*, 32: "Laughter holding both his sides." All the early eds. have "coffe" and "loffe." Halliwell-Phillipps refers to the old nursery ballad of Mother Hubbard, who, after she had bought her dog a *coffin*, came home and found him *loffing*. He adds that there appears to have been some difference of opinion as to the pronunciation of the word. Marston (*Parasitaster*, 1606) mentions a critic who vowed "to leve to posteritie the true orthography and pronunciation of *laughing*."

56. *Waxen*. Wax, increase. S. has the participle *waxen* in *R. of L.* 1663: "lips new-waxen pale"; and 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 76: "waxen deaf."

Neeze is the old form of *sneeze* (Anglo-Saxon *niesan*). It is found in *Job*, xli. 18, and originally occurred in 2 *Kings*, iv. 35.

57. *Wasted*. Spent; as in *V. and A.* 24, *M. of V.* iii. 4. 12, etc. Cf. Milton, *Sonnet to Mr. Lawrence*:—

> "Where shall we sometimes meet, and by the fire
> Help waste a sullen day?"

There, however, the idea may be rather of "killing time."

58. *Room* may be here a dissyllable, as Abbott makes it. Cf. *moon's*, ii. 1. 7. Johnson remarks that *Fairy* or *Faëry* is sometimes a trisyllable, as in Spenser.

61. *Fairies, skip hence*. All the early eds. have "Fairy"; changed to the plural by Theobald. Some think that "Fairy" is used in a plural sense.

67. *Pipes of corn*. Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 913: "pipe on oaten straws." Ritson quotes Chaucer's "pipes made of grene corne." *Versing* is used nowhere else by S. as a verb.

71. *Buskin'd*. Neither this word nor *buskin* is found elsewhere in S.

72. *Must be*. "Sometimes used by S. to mean no more than definite futurity, like our *is to be*" (Abbott).

75. *Glance.* Hint (Schmidt); as in *J. C.* i. 2. 324. It is sometimes transitive = hint at; as in *C. of E.* v. 1. 66: "I often glanced it."

77. *Glimmering.* Cf. iii. 2. 61 and v. 1. 391 below.

78. *Perigenia.* See extract from North's *Plutarch*, p. 132 above (where the spelling is "Perigouna"); also for the proper names that follow. For *Ægle* all the early eds. have "Eagles"; corrected by Rowe.

82. *The middle summer's spring.* Probably the beginning of midsummer. In Churchyard's *Charitie*, 1595, we have "a summer spring" = beginning of summer. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 4. 35: "the spring of day;" an expression also used by Holinshed.

84. *Paved.* Probably = pebbly; not, as Johnson explains it, "laid round the edge with stone."

85. *Margent.* Cf. *L. C.* 39: —

> "Which one by one she in a river threw,
> Upon whose weeping margent she was set."

Elsewhere S. uses the word for the margin of a book (*L. L. L.* v. 2. 8); for a gloss or comment written on such margin (*Ham.* v. 2. 162); and for the eyes, "as interpreters of the mind, compared to the margin of books" (Schmidt). See *R. of L.* 102, *L. L. L.* ii. 1. 246, and *R. and J.* i. 3. 86.

86. *Ringlets.* Fairy rings. See on *orbs*, line 9 above. Furness thinks that the curls of the fairies are meant. S. uses the word only here and in *Temp.* v. 1. 37, where it has the meaning I give it here: —

> "you demi-puppets that
> By moonshine do the green sour ringlets make
> Whereof the ewe not bites."

90. *Contagious.* Poisonous, pestilential. Cf. *K. John*, v. 4. 33: "night, whose black, contagious breath"; *Hen. V.* iii. 3. 31: "filthy and contagious clouds," etc.

91. *Hath.* The singular verb with a plural relative is not un-

common. Some regard it as the old 3d person plural in *-th*. For *petty* (the folio reading) the quartos have "pelting," which some editors prefer, because it carries with it a "tinge of contempt"; but so does *petty*, for that matter. As Furness remarks, there seems to be no good reason for deserting the folio here. For *pelting*, cf. *Rich. II.* ii. 1. 60: "pelting farm"; *M. for M.* ii. 2. 112: "every pelting petty officer," etc.

92. *Continents.* The banks that *contain* or restrain them; the original sense of the word. Cf. *Lear*, iii. 2. 58: —

> "close pent-up guilts,
> Rive your concealing continents," etc.

95. *Ere his youth*, etc. *His* = *its*; the latter word was only just coming into use in the time of S. It does not occur in the earlier plays (except in 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 393) and very rarely in the later ones. For the figure, cf. *Sonn.* 12. 7: —

> "And summer's green all girded up in sheaves
> Borne on the bier with white and bristly beard."

97. *Murrain.* Not found as an adjective anywhere else in S. The noun occurs three times (*Temp.* iii. 2. 88, *T. and C.* ii. 1. 20, *Cor.* i. 5. 3), but only as an imprecation.

98. *The nine men's morris.* A game played on three squares cut in the turf, one within another, each party having nine "men," which were moved somewhat as in draughts, or "checkers." Cotgrave, in his *Dict.*, under "Merelles," has the following: "Le jeu des Merelles. The boyish game called Merils, or fivepenny morris; played here most commonly with stones, but in France with pawns, or men made on purpose, and termed *merelles*." Douce says that it was also a table-game; and that a representation of two monkeys playing it may be seen in a German edition of *Petrarch de Remedio Utriusque Fortunæ*, the cuts in which were done in 1520.

99. *Mazes.* "This alludes to a sport still followed by boys, now called *running the figure of eight*" (Steevens). This also was

played on figures cut in the turf. *Quaint* = elaborate; as often. *Wanton* = luxuriant. Cf. *Rich. II.* i. 3. 214: "wanton springs"; 1 *Hen. IV.* iii. 1. 214: "the wanton rushes," etc.

100. *Undistinguishable.* Used by S. only here and in iv. 1. 187 below.

101. *The human mortals.* Human beings, as distinguished from fairies.

Want their winter here. This probably means, as Capell suggested, "their accustomed winter"; namely, as the next line shows, "a winter enlivened with mirth," etc. Theobald suggested "winter cheer," which some adopt. Others point thus: "The human mortals want; their winter here," etc.; but no change seems necessary. The allusion in the next line is to the popular Christmas carols.

103. *The moon,* etc. Cf. *W. T.* i. 2. 427: —

> "you may as well
> Forbid the sea for to obey the moon";

1 *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 35: "governed, as the sea is, by the moon," etc.

105. *Rheumatic diseases.* Colds, coughs, catarrhs, etc. The word is accented on the first syllable; as in *V. and A.* 135: "O'erworn, despised, rheumatic, and cold"; the only other instance in verse in S.

106. For *thorough,* see on line 3 above. *Distemperature* = disorder. Cf. 1. *Hen. IV.* iii. 1. 34: —

> "Our grandam earth, having this distemperature
> In passion shook";

Id. v. 1. 3: —

> "How bloodily the sun begins to peer
> Above yon busky hill! the day looks pale
> At his distemperature."

109. *Hiems' thin and icy crown.* The early eds. have "chinne" or "chin." *Thin* was Tyrwhitt's emendation, and has been gen-

erally adopted. A few editors have attempted to defend "chin." *Hiems* is mentioned by S. only here and in *L. L. L.* v. 2. 901: "This side is Hiems, Winter."

112. *Childing.* Fruitful; used nowhere else by S. White suggests "chiding," as more in keeping with "angry winter," but *childing* is apt and expressive in reference to *autumn.*

113. *Mazed.* Amazed (but not an abbreviation of that word), bewildered; used by S. only here and in 1 *Hen. VI.* iv. 2. 47 and *Hen. VIII.* ii. 4. 185.

114. *By their increase.* By their produce. Cf. *Sonn.* 97. 6: "The teeming autumn, big with rich increase," etc. See also *Psalms*, lxvii. 6, lxxxv. 12, etc.

116. *Dissension.* A quadrisyllable. See on i. 1. 149.

117. *Original.* Used by S. as a noun here and in 2 *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 131; nowhere as an adjective.

121. *Henchman.* Page of honour. The word originally meant "a horseman attendant on a knight or person of high degree." Cf. Chaucer, *The Floure and the Leafe:* "Every knight had after him riding three henshmen, on him awaiting." Meres, in his *Palladis Tamia* (1598), says: "As the visible light is the henchman of the sun's brightnes, so are the benefits of God heralds of the divine bounty."

123. *Votaress.* Used by S. only here and in 160 below; unless we add *Per.* iv. prol. 4, which is quite certainly not his. *Votary* is used as feminine in *Sonn.* 154. 5; and *votarist* in *M. for M.* i. 4. 5 and *Oth.* iv. 2. 190.

124. *The spiced Indian air.* Halliwell-Phillipps cites *Bartholomæus de Glanvilla* (1582): "As the rivers there are very many, so are they very great, through whose watery overflowing it commeth to passe that in the moyst grounde, the force of the sunne approaching, ingendreth or bringeth forth all things in great quantitie, and seemeth almost to fill the whole world *with spice* and precious stones, of which it aboundeth more than all other countries of the world."

126. *Neptune's yellow sands.* Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 376: "Come unto these yellow sands."

131. *Voyage.* A dissyllable here.

135. *Intend you stay?* S. often omits the *to* of the infinitive where it is now inserted, and *vice versa.*

137. *Round.* Cf. *Macb.* iv. 1. 130: "While you perform your antic round." See on 9 and 86 above.

142. *Chide.* Scold, quarrel. Cf. iii. 2. 45 below. We have it used transitively, as now, in iii. 2. 200, 218, and in a slightly different sense in 312. In iv. 1. 115 it is applied to the noise of dogs.

146. *Since.* When; as in *W. T.* v. 1. 219, 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 1. 9, etc.

147. *Mermaid.* Siren; as often in S. Cf. *V. and A.* 429, 777, *R. of L.* 1411, *C. of E.* iii. 2. 45, 169, etc.

For the supposed allegorical meaning of this passage, see p. 25 above.

148. *Dulcet and harmonious breath.* Cf. *T. N.* ii. 3. 21: "So sweet a breath to sing." See iii. 2. 44 and iv. 2. 42 below.

150. *Stars shot madly,* etc. For *spheres,* see on 7 above. Cf. *R. of L.* 1525: "And little stars shot from their fixed places;" *Ham.* i. 5. 17: "Make thy two eyes, like stars, start from their spheres"; *A. and C.* iii. 13. 145: —

> "When my good stars, that were my former guides,
> Have empty left their orbs, and shot their fires
> Into the abysm of hell."

155. *A fair vestal,* etc. There is no doubt about the allusion to Queen Elizabeth here. She received many compliments of the kind, but never one so graceful. They were generally of the type of those quoted by Steevens from *Soliman and Perseda* (1599), in which Death vows he will spare —

> "none but sacred Cynthia's friend,
> Whom Death did fear before her life began;
> For holy fates have graven it in their tables,
> That Death shall die, if he attempt her end
> Whose life is heaven's delight, and Cynthia's friend";

and from *Tancred and Gismund* (1592): —

> "There lives a virgin, one without compare,
> Who of all graces hath her heavenly share;
> In whose renowne, and for whose happie days,
> Let us record this Pæan of her praise," etc.

As Steevens adds, "if incense was thrown in cart-loads on the altar, this propitious deity was not disgusted with the smoke of it."

156. *Smartly.* Vigorously; used by S. only here.

157. *As it should pierce.* As *if;* a common ellipsis.

159. *The chaste beams of the watery moon.* Cf. i. 1. 73: "the cold fruitless moon"; iii. 1. 196: "The moon methinks looks with a watery eye"; *Rich. III.* ii. 2. 69: "the watery moon"; *R. and J.* i. 4. 62: "the moonshine's watery beams."

161. *Fancy-free.* See on i. 1. 155. In *Queen Elizabeth's Entertainement in Suffolke and Norfolke,* written by Churchyard, Chastity deprives Cupid of his bow and presents it to the queen: "and bycause that the Queene had chosen the best life, she gave the Queene Cupid's bow, to learne to shoote at whome she pleased: since none could wound her highnesse hart, it was meete (said Chastitie) that she should do with Cupid's bowe and arrowes what she pleased."

165. *Love-in-idleness.* Halliwell-Phillipps quotes *MS. Sloan.* 797, fol. 61: "Viola tricolor, hart's ease; herba Trinitatis, herba clavellata, paunsies, love-in-idlenes." Cf. *T. of S.* i. 1. 156: "I found the effect of love in idleness." Taylor, the Water-Poet, quibbling on the names of plants, says: —

> "When passions are let loose without a bridle,
> Then precious *time* is turn'd to *love-in-idle.*"

169. *It sees.* "This is not strictly grammatical, since *it* can only apply to *man* or *woman* in the previous line; nevertheless it is probably what S. wrote" (Collier).

171. *The leviathan.* Elsewhere mentioned in *T. G. of V.* iii. 2. 80 and *Hen. V.* iii. 3. 26.

185. *Enter Demetrius, Helena following him.* "However forward and indecorous the conduct of Helena in pursuing Demetrius may appear to modern readers, such examples are very frequent in old romances of chivalry, wherein S. was undoubtedly well read. The beautiful ballad of *The Nut-Brown Maid* might have been more immediately in his recollection, many parts of this scene having a very strong resemblance to it" (Douce).

187. *The one I 'll slay*, etc. All the early eds. have "stay" and "stayeth," which some editors retain, making the line = "The one I 'll stop, the other hindereth me." *Slay* and *slayeth*, first suggested by Thirlby and adopted by Theobald, are accepted by most of the modern editors. It has been objected to *slay* that it makes Demetrius bloodthirsty, but cf. what Lysander says, ii. 2. 106 below: —

> "Where is Demetrius? O, how fit a word
> Is that vile name to perish on my sword!"

and the words of Demetrius himself, iii. 2. 64: "I had rather give his carcass to my hounds." Besides, as *sl* and *st* in the old fonts of type were single characters (like *fi* and *fl* now), they were very liable to be confounded by a compositor.

189. *Wode within this wood.* The 1st quarto has "wodde . . . wood"; the other early eds. "wood . . . wood." *Wode* or *wood* (pronounced alike) = mad, frantic. Cf. *V. and A.* 740: "frenzies wood"; 1 *Hen. VI.* iv. 7. 35: "raging-wood." The same quibble occurs in the *Countess of Pembroke's Yvy-church*: —

> "Daphne goes to the *woods*, and vows herself to Diana;
> Phœbus goes stark *wood* for love and fancie to Daphne."

See also Spenser, *F. Q.* i. 4. 34: "Through unadvized rashnes woxen wood"; *Id.* ii. 4. 11: "And calme the tempest of his passion wood."

192. *Adamant.* Used here for the magnet; as in *T. and C.* iii. 2. 186: "As iron to adamant." In 1 *Hen. VI.* i. 4. 52 (probably not by S.) it has its modern meaning: —

> "I could rend bars of steel
> And spurn in pieces posts of adamant."

Steevens quotes Edward Fenton, *Certaine Secrete Wonders of Nature*, 1569: "there is now a dayes a kind of adamant which draweth unto it fleshe, and the same so strongly, that it hath power to knit and tie together two mouthes of contrary persons, and drawe the heart of a man out of his bodie without offendyng any parte of him." Cf. Mandeville, *Travels:* "the ademand, that is the schipmannes ston, that draweth the nedle to him." Magnetic repulsion is referred to in Webster, *The White Devil:* —

> "We 'll be as differing as two adamants;
> The one shall shun the other."

196. *Speak you fair.* Speak kindly or gently to you. Cf. *C. of E.* iv. 2. 15: "Didst speak him fair?" *Id.* iv. 4. 157: "you saw they speak us fair"; *M. of V.* iv. 1. 275: "speak me fair in death" (that is, speak well *of* me), etc.

198. *Nor I cannot.* Double negatives are common in S. and other writers of the time. In *T. N.* iii. 1. 171 we find a triple negative: "nor never none," etc. See also *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 27. The idiom is "deeply rooted in the Germanic languages" (Mätzner).

205. *Worser.* Often used by S. It occurs as an adverb in *A. and C.* ii. 5. 90, *Oth.* i. 1. 95 and iv. 1. 105.

211. *Impeach.* Bring into question, expose to reproach or scandal. Cf. *M. of V.* iii. 3. 29: "impeach the justice of the state"; *Rich. II.* ii. 1. 189: "impeach my height," etc.

215. *The ill counsel.* The evil suggestions. On the passage, cf. Milton, *Comus*, 398–407.

217. All the early eds. point the line thus: "Your virtue is my privilege; for that"; which is retained by the Cambridge editors,

That is then "a conjunctional affix." The pointing in the text was suggested by Tyrwhitt and is generally adopted.

220. *Nor doth this wood*, etc. Malone compares 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 360: —

> "A wilderness is populous enough,
> So Suffolk had thy heavenly company."

221. *In my respect.* In my eyes, in my view. Cf. the use of the verb in i. 1. 160 above.

228. *Daphne.* The familiar myth is alluded to in *T. of S.* ind. 2. 59 and *T. and C.* i. 1. 101.

229. *Griffin.* Mentioned by S. only here and in 1 *Hen. IV.* iii. 1. 152: "A clip-wing'd griffin."

230. *Makes speed.* Makes haste; as in *Sonn.* 50. 8, *T. G. of V.* iii. 1. 169, 3 *Hen. VI.* ii. 5. 135, etc.

232. *Stay.* Stay or wait *for;* as in v. 1. 255 below. Cf. *M. of V.* ii. 8. 40, *Rich. II.* i. 3. 4, etc.

246. *Where.* Metrically a dissyllable.

247. *Oxlips.* "The greater cowslip, *Primula elatior*" (Schmidt). Cf. *W. T.* iv. 4. 125: "bold oxlips." Steevens quotes Drayton, *Polyolbion*, xv.: —

> "To sort these flowers of showe, with other that were sweet,
> The cowslip then they couch, and th' oxlip for her meet."

248. *Over-canopied with luscious woodbine.* For *luscious* Theobald suggested "lush," which is found in *Temp.* ii. 1. 52. *Luscious* is used by S. nowhere else except in *Oth.* i. 3. 354. Here it may be metrically a monosyllable.

249. *Musk-roses* Mentioned also in ii. 2. 3 and iv. 1. 3 below; nowhere else in S. The only other reference to the *eglantine* is in *Cymb.* iv. 2. 223.

250. *Sometime of.* Sometimes during.

253. *Weed.* Robe, garment. Cf. ii. 2. 71 below: "Weeds of Athens." See also *Cor.* ii. 3. 229, *Lear*, iv. 7. 7, etc.

263. *Fond on her.* Cf. *J. C.* i. 2. 71: "jealous on me."

264. *Look thou meet.* For the subjunctive after a verb of command, cf. ii. 1. 19 above.

SCENE II. — 1. *Roundel.* The word here probably means a dance in a circle; like *round* in ii. 1. 137 above. S. uses the word nowhere else. Ben Jonson has it in *A Tale of a Tub*, ii. 1: —

> "you'd have your daughters and maids
> Dance o'er the fields like faies to church, this frost.
> I'll have no rondels, I, in the queen's paths."

2. *The third part of a minute.* Warburton thought this nonsense, but it is in keeping with the characters. If Puck could girdle the world in forty minutes, a third of a minute would be no insignificant portion of fairy time.

3. *Cankers.* Canker-worms; as in *V. and A.* 655, *Sonn.* 35. 4, 95. 2, *Temp.* i. 2. 415, etc. It means the wild rose in *Much Ado* i. 3. 28 and 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 3. 176. Cf. Milton, *Lycidas*, 45: "As killing as the canker to the rose." The *musk-rose* is not the flower now known by that name in England, which is of more recent introduction. Titania's rose is described by Gerard in his *Herbal*, 1597, the Latin name being given as *Rosa Moschata*: "The single muske-rose hath divers long shootes of a greenish colour, and woodie substance, armed with very sharpe prickles, dividing it selfe into divers branches: whereon do growe long leaves, smooth and shining, made of divers leaves set upon a middle rib, like the other roses. The flowers growe on the tops of the branches of a white colour, and pleasant sweete smell, like that of muske, whereof it took his name; having certain yellow seedes in the middle, as the rest of the roses have, etc."

4. *Rere-mice.* Bats. Also spelled *rear-mice.* Cf. Golding's *Ovid, Met.* iv.: "And we in English language bats or reremice call the same"; Holland's *Pliny*, x. 61: "The rere-mouse, or bat, alone

of all creatures that fly, bringeth forth young alive, and none but she hath wings made of pannicles or thin skins," etc.

6. *Clamorous.* Perhaps, as Walker suggests, here = wailing. It may have the same sense in *Rich. II.* v. 5. 56: "Clamorous groans." The noun *clamour* is evidently often used by S. in the sense of wailing; as in *R. of L.* 681, 1804, *Lear*, iv. 3. 33, v. 3, 208, etc. So the verb in *Macb.* ii. 3. 65: —

> "the obscene bird
> Clamour'd the livelong night."

7. *Quaint.* Dainty. Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 317: "My quaint Ariel"; *Much Ado*, iii. 4. 22: "a fine, quaint, graceful, and excellent fashion," etc. See also on ii. 1. 99 above.

8. *Offices.* Duties, employments; as often. Cf. *Temp.* i. 1. 40, i. 2. 312, v. 1. 156, *M. of V.* ii. 6. 43, ii. 9. 61, etc.

9. *Double tongue.* Forked tongue. Cf. iii. 2. 72: "doubler tongue"; and *Temp.* ii. 2. 13: "All wound with adders, who with cloven tongues," etc.

11. *Newts and blind-worms.* The *newt* was supposed to be poisonous. Topsell, in his *Historie of Serpents*, 1608, says that when it is "mooved to anger," its whole body becomes white, "through a kind of white humour or poyson," etc. The *blind-worm* is the slow-worm, of which the same writer says that "it is harmlesse except being provoked," when "the poyson thereof is very strong." "Eye of newt" and "blind-worm's sting" are ingredients of the Witches' cauldron, *Macb.* iv. 1.

13. *Philomel.* The nightingale. Cf. *R. of L.* 1079: —

> "By this lamenting Philomel has ended
> The well-tun'd warble of her nightly sorrow."

See also *Id.* 1128, *Sonn.* 102. 7, etc. We have the full name *Philomela* in *P. P.* 197, *T. A.* ii. 4. 38, and iv. 1. 53.

15. *Lulla, lulla*, etc. A similar burden is found in several old songs. One, printed in 1530, begins "By, by, lullaby, rockyd I my chyld."

20. *Spiders.* Topsell says: "Our spyders in England are not so venomous as in other parts of the world, and I have seene a madde man eate many of them without eyther death or death's harme, or any other manifest accident or alteration to ensue," etc. Cowdray, *Treasurie of Similies*, 1600, remarks: "the spider gathereth poyson to the same flowers, that the bee gathereth honie; so in the Word of God," etc.

25. *Hence, away*, etc. In the old eds. this is made part of the song, but it is evidently spoken after the song is over.

30. *Ounce.* The *Felis uncia* (Schmidt), or mountain panther; mentioned by S. only here.

31. *Pard.* Leopard. Cf. *Temp.* iv. 1. 262: —

> "more pinch-spotted make them
> Than pard or cat o' mountain."

36. *Troth.* Truth. Cf. *Cor.* iv. 5. 198: "to say the troth on 't"; *Cymb.* v. 5. 274: "I 'll speak troth," etc. *Forgot* is the more common form of the participle in S. The reflexive use of *us* and other personal pronouns is common with him.

45. *O, take the sense*, etc. "Understand *the meaning of my innocence*, or *my innocent meaning.* Let no suspicion of ill enter thy mind" (Johnson).

46. *Love takes the meaning*, etc. "In the conversation of those who are assured of each other's kindness, not *suspicion* but *love takes the meaning.* No malevolent interpretation is to be made, but all is to be received in the sense which *love* can find, and which *love* can dictate" (Johnson). Henley says: "The idea is exactly similar to that of St. Paul: 'Love thinketh no evil.'"

49. *Interchained.* The quarto reading, which, as Halliwell-Phillipps remarks, is "far more forcible and pertinent" than the "interchanged" of the folios, and it is also more in harmony with *knit.*

54. *Beshrew.* "Originally a mild, indeed very mild, form of imprecation = woe to; sometimes so far from implying a curse as to

be uttered coaxingly, nay even with some tenderness" (Schmidt). In phrases like the present it is "a form of simple asseveration." Cf. v. 1. 290 below: "Beshrew my heart but I pity the man"; *M. of V.* ii. 6. 52: "Beshrew me but I love her heartily," etc.

61. *Thy love ne'er alter*, etc. The third person imperative, or "the subjunctive used optatively or imperatively" (Abbott).

68. *Approve.* Prove. Cf. *M. of V.* iii. 2. 79: "approve it with a text," etc.

71. *Weeds.* See on ii. 1. 253 above.

73. *Despised.* The omission of the relative is common in Elizabethan English.

77. *Near this lack-love*, etc. The metre of this line has sorely troubled the critics. Pope changed it to "Near to this lack-love, this kill-curtesie"; Theobald to "Near to this kill-courtesie"; Warburton to "Near to this lack-love kill-curtesie"; Steevens to "Near this lack-love, kill-curtesy"; other changes have been suggested. S. allows himself considerable freedom in this measure. Line 74 just above is iambic throughout; and this is like it if we make *courtesy* a dissyllable, as it sometimes is, or if we scan thus: "Near this | lack-love, | this kill-cour- | tesy," treating the second *this* as an extra unaccented syllable.

79. *Owe.* Own, possess; as very often. Cf. *A. W.* v. 3. 297; "The jeweller that owes the ring is sent for," etc. For the other meaning of *owe*, see iii. 2. 85 below.

80, 81. *Let love forbid*, etc. Cf. *Macb.* i. 3. 19: —

> "Sleep shall neither night nor day
> Hang upon his pent-house lid."

86. *Darkling.* In the dark. Cf. *Lear*, i. 4. 237: "So out went the candle, and we were left darkling"; *A. and C.* iv. 15. 10: —

> "O sun,
> Burn the great sphere thou movest in! darkling stand
> The varying shore o' the world!"

Milton uses the word once, in *P. L.* iii. 39: —

> "as the wakeful bird
> Sings darkling," etc.

See also Johnson, *Vanity of Human Wishes*, 346: —

> "Must helpless man, in ignorance sedate,
> Roll darkling down the torrent of his fate?"

and again, in one of his hymns: "On darkling man in pure effulgence shine," etc.

87. *I alone*, etc. I will go alone. Such transpositions of adverbs (particularly those of limitation, like *only*, *even*, *yet*, etc.) are very common in S.

88. *Fond*. Foolish (as often), or combining that sense with that of "loving" (also as often).

89. *The lesser is my grace*. S. often uses *lesser* both as adjective and as adverb. For an example of the latter, see *Macb.* v. 2. 13. *Grace* here either = favour, as Johnson explains it (the less favour I gain), or good fortune, happiness (Schmidt), as in *M. for M.* i. 4. 69: —

> "Unless you have the grace by your fair prayer
> To soften Angelo," etc.

97. *As a monster*, etc. Referring to herself, not to Demetrius (Furness).

99. *Sphery*. Starlike, heavenly. For *eyne*, see on i. 1. 242.

104. *Nature shows art*. The quarto reading. The 1st folio has "Nature her shewes"; and the later folios, "Nature here shews." Some editors follow Malone's "Nature shows her art." Steevens, who retains "here," explains the passage thus: "On this occasion, says Lysander, the work of nature resembles that of art, namely (as our author expresses it in *L. C.* 286) an object 'glaz'd with crystal.'"

108, 109. *Do not say so*, etc. See p. 11 above.

113. *Helena I love.* So in 1st quarto ; the other early eds. have "Helena now I love."

118. *Ripe not.* "Not ripe"; which Rowe substituted. Transpositions of *not* are not unfrequent in S.

119. *Touching now the point*, etc. Cf. *Hen. VIII.* iii. 2. 223: "I have touch'd the highest point of all my greatness."

120. *Reason becomes the marshal*, etc. Reason is now the director of my will. Cf. *Macb.* ii. 1. 42: "Thou marshall'st me the way that I was going."

121. *O'erlook.* Look over, peruse. Cf. *T. G. of V.* i. 2. 50: "And yet I would I had o'erlooked the letter"; *Lear*, v. 1. 50: "I will o'erlook thy paper," etc.

129. *Good troth.* Cf. *Hen. VIII.* ii. 3. 33: "Nay, good troth," etc. It is a contraction of *in good troth* (*T and C.* iii. 1. 124). The commonest form of the asseveration is *by my troth* (*M. W.* i. 1. 199, etc.). *In good sooth* and *good sooth* are both common ; so *in sooth* and *sooth* (iii. 2. 265 below). *Sooth*, like *troth*, originally = truth. See on 36 above.

132. *True gentleness.* "What, in modern language, we should call the *spirit of a gentleman*" (Percy).

133. *Of.* By; as in *Macb.* iii. 6. 27: "Received of the most pious Edward," etc. So in 134, 140, and 142 just below. Cf. *Acts*, xxiii. 10, 27.

147. *Ay me.* See on i. 1. 132.

149. *Eat.* Ate; which is substituted by many editors, though never found in the early eds. For the participle S. uses both *eat* and *eaten*.

154. *Of all loves.* For love's sake. Cf. *M. W.* ii. 2. 119: "Mistress Page would desire you to send her your little page, of all loves." In *Oth.* iii. 1. 13, the quarto of 1622 has "of all loves"; the folio, "for love's sake." Halliwell-Phillipps remarks that the literal signification of the phrase is perhaps seen in the words addressed by Queen Katherine on her trial to Henry VIII.: "Sir, I beseech you for all the loves that hath been between us, and for the love of God,

let me have justice and right" (Cavendish's *Life of Wolsey*). Cf. also *A Woman Killed with Kindness* (1617): "Of all the loves betwixt thee and me, tell me what thou thinkest of this?" The phrase occurs in *Gammer Gurton's Needle* in the form, "for al the loves on earth."

I swoon almost. I almost swoon. The transposition is a common one. See on 87 above.

156. *Either.* Metrically a monosyllable, as in ii. 1. 32, etc.

ACT III

Scene I. — 2. *Pat, pat.* Exactly. Cf. v. 1. 187 below; also *Hen. VIII.* ii. 3. 84, *Lear*, i. 2. 146, etc.

4. *Tiring-house.* Dressing-room. See quotation in note on i. 2. 101. S. uses the word only here.

7. *Bully Bottom.* Cf. *M. W.* i. 3. 6: "bully Hercules"; *Id.* ii. 3. 18: "bully doctor"; *Id.* iv. 5. 17: "Bully knight! Bully Sir John!" etc. It is still a familiar bit of slang.

12. *By 'r lakin.* A colloquial contraction of *By our ladykin*, referring to the Virgin Mary. S. uses it only here and in *Temp.* iii. 3. 1. *By 'r lady* occurs frequently; as in *M. W.* i. 1. 28, etc. *Parlous* is a popular corruption of *perilous.* It came to be used as a mere intensive = *excessive* or sometimes *wonderful.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 45: "a parlous state"; *Rich. III.* ii. 4. 35: "a parlous boy."

18. *More better.* Double comparatives and superlatives are common in Elizabethan English.

22. *Eight and six.* That is, in alternate verses of eight and six syllables. Of course, Bottom's modification of it is absurd.

25. *Afeard.* Not a vulgarism, but used by S. interchangeably with *afraid.*

30. *Your lion.* A common colloquial use of *your.* Howell, in his *Instructions for Forraine Travel* (1642), says: "There is an

odd kind of Anglicism, wherein some do frequently express themselves, as to say — Your Boores of Holland, sir; Your Jesuits of Spain, sir; Your Courtesans of Venice, sir; whereunto one answered (not impertinently) *My* Courtesans, sir? Pox on them all for me! They are none of *my* Courtesans."

41. *Pity of my life.* The phrase occurs again in *M. for M.* ii. 1. 77. Cf. *Id.* ii. 3. 42: "'T is pity of him," etc.

43. *Tell them plainly*, etc. As Malone remarks, it is not improbable that this was suggested by an incident related in a collection of jests in *MS. Harl.* 6395: "There was a spectacle presented to Queen Elizabeth on the water, and among others Harry Goldingham was to represent Arion upon the dolphin's backe; but finding his voice to be very hoarse and unpleasant, when he came to performe it, he teares off his disguise, and sweares he was none of Arion, not he, but eene honest Harry Goldingham; which blunt discoverie pleas'd the Queene better than if it had gone through in the right way; yet he could order his voice to an instrument exceeding well." Scott has made good use of the incident in *Kenilworth.*

45. *There is two*, etc. A singular verb *before* a plural subject is often found in the mouths of better folk than Quince. Cf. *Cymb.* iv. 2. 371: "There is no more such masters," etc.

53. *It doth shine.* See p. 23 above and note on i. 1. 223.

55. *The great chamber.* The hall of state.

57. *A bush of thorns.* An old superstition identified the man in the moon with the man that gathered sticks on the Sabbath day (*Numbers*, xv. 32).

59. *Present.* Represent; not a vulgarism. Cf. *Temp.* iv. 1. 167: "when I presented Ceres"; *Hen. VIII.* prol. 5: —

> "Such noble scenes as draw the eye to flow
> We now present";

Milton, *Il Pens.* 99: "Presenting Thebes, or Pelops' line," etc.

74. *Cue.* Still used as a stage term for the ending of a speech,

as the catchword given to the actor who is to speak next. Cf. *M. W.* iii. 3. 39: "remember you your cue," etc. It is used figuratively in *Hen. V.* iii. 6. 130, *Oth.* i. 2. 83, etc.

77. *A play toward.* In preparation, at hand. Cf. *T. of S.* i. 1. 68: "here's some good pastime toward"; *Ham.* i. 1. 77; "What might be toward?"

86. *A stranger Pyramus*, etc. The quartos assign this speech to *Quince;* the folios, to *Puck*, to whom it evidently belongs. *Here*, as Steevens suggests, probably means in the theatre where the play is being acted.

93. *Brisky* is of course burlesque for *brisk*. *Juvenal* (=youth) is used only here, and by Armado (*L. L. L.* i. 2. 8, iii. 1. 67) and Falstaff in jesting (2 *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 22). *Eke*, then obsolescent, S. puts into the mouth of no other character except Pistol and the Host (*M. W.* i. 3. 105, ii. 3. 77).

101. *Bottom with an ass's head.* Scot, in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1584, gives the following recipe for such a transformation: "Cut off the head of a horsse or an ass (before they be dead, otherwise the vertue or strength thereof will be the lesse effectuall) and make an earthen vessel of fit capacitie to conteine the same, and let it be filled with the oile and fat thereof; cover it close, and dawbe it over with lome: let it boile over a soft fier three daies continuallie, that the flesh boiled may run into oile, so as the bare bones may be seen: beate the haire into powder, and mingle the same with the oile; and annoint the heads of the standers by, and they shall seeme to have horsses or asses heads."

104. *A round.* Furness suggests that S. may have written "around," though he does not use the adverb elsewhere.

106. *Sometime a horse*, etc. Cf. the old ballad, quoted above (on ii. 1. 3): —

> "Sometimes I meete them like a man,
> Sometimes an ox, sometimes an hound,
> And to a horse I turn me can,
> And trip and trot them round and round." etc.

See also the ballad of *The Merry Pranks of Robin Goodfellow:* —

"Sometimes a neighing horse was he,
sometimes a gruntling hog,
Sometimes a bird, sometimes a crow,
sometimes a snarling dog.

* * * * *

Sometimes a cripple he would seeme,
sometimes a souldier brave:
Sometimes a fox, sometimes a hare;
brave pastimes would he have.
Sometimes an owle he'd seeme to be,
sometimes a skipping frog;
Sometimes a kirne, in Irish shape,
to leape ore mire or bog:
Sometimes he'd counterfeit a voyce,
and travellers call astray,
Sometimes a walking fire he'd be,
and lead them from their way."

The *fire*, both here and in the play, is of course the *ignis fatuus*, or Will-of-the-wisp.

108. *And neigh, and bark*, etc. Cf. *Ham.* iii. i. 151: "The courtier's, scholar's, soldier's, eye, tongue, sword"; *Macb.* i. 3. 60: —

"Speak then to me, who neither beg nor fear
Your favours nor your hate";

and *W. T.* iii. 2. 164: —

"though I with death and with
Reward did threaten and encourage him."

This figure, which some writers call a form of *chiasm*, was a favourite one with S., who uses it many times besides those mentioned here.

114. *An ass-head of your own.* Johnson inferred from this that Snout had mentioned an ass's head, and therefore wanted to read: "*Snout.* O Bottom, thou art changed! what do I see on thee?

an ass's head?" But this is unnecessary, the phrase being a vernacular one of the day. The fact that Bottom is unconscious of his transformation makes its introduction here very comical. So with "this is to make an ass of me," just below.

117. *Translated.* Transformed. See on i. 1. 191.

123. *The ousel cock.* The *ousel*, *oosel*, or *woosel* (as it is spelled in the early eds.) was the blackbird. Halliwell-Phillipps quotes Barnefield, *The Affectionate Shepherd* (1594): —

> "House-doves are white, and oozels blackbirdes bee,
> Yet what a difference in the taste we see!"

Castell of Health (1595): "Blacke-birds or ousyls among wild-foule have the chief praise for lightnes of digestion," etc. The name is now applied to a species which is larger than the ordinary English blackbird, and has a white crescent on the breast.

125. *The throstle.* The thrush, *Turdus musicus* (Schmidt); also mentioned in *M. of V.* i. 2. 65. Cf. Gower, *Conf. Am.* (1554): "The throstel with the nightingale"; Drayton, *Shepherd's Garland* (1593): —

> "The throstlecock, by breaking of the day,
> Chants to his swete full many a lovely lay," etc.

126. *Quill.* Probably = pipe, or note; not wing-feather, as Schmidt explains it. Cf. Milton, *Lycidas*, 188: "He touch'd the tender stops of various quills."

127. *What angel*, etc. Malone says: "Perhaps a parody on a line in *The Spanish Tragedy*, often ridiculed by the poets of our author's time: 'What outcry calls me from my naked bed?'"[1]

129. *Plain-song.* A musical term, meaning "the simple melody without harmony." Cf. Chaucer, *The Cuckow and the Nightingale*,

[1] It could hardly have been the "naked bed" that was ridiculed, for that was a common phrase. Cf. *V. and A.* 397: "in her naked bed," which is like "sick bed," "idle bed" (*J. C.* ii. 1. 117), etc.

118, where the cuckoo says: "For my song is both true and plaine"; Skelton, *Phyllyp Sparrowe*: —

> "To kepe just playne songe
> Our chanters shall be your cuckoue," etc.

132. *Set his wit.* Oppose his wit. Cf. *T. and C.* ii. 1. 94: "Will you set your wit to a fool's?"

133. *Cry 'cuckoo.'* Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 908: —

> "The cuckoo then, on every tree,
> Mocks married men," etc.

Never so = ever so much.

137. *Enthralled.* Cf. i. 1. 136 above.

138. *Perforce.* See on ii. 1. 26 above.

144. *Gleek.* Jest. Cf. *Hen. V.* v. 1. 78: "I have seen you gleeking and galling at this gentleman," etc. We have the noun in 1 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 123 and *R. and J.* iv. 5. 115.

150. *Whether.* See on i. 1. 69.

151. *Rate.* Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 92: "o'erpriz'd all popular rate," etc.

152. *Still.* Always; as in i. 1. 212 above.

155. *Jewels from the deep.* Cf. *Rich. III.* i. 4. 32: —

> "reflecting gems
> That woo'd the slimy bottom of the deep."

163. *Apricocks.* Apricots (*Prunus Armeniaca*); the earlier and more accurate spelling. The word is used by S. only here and in *Rich. II.* iii. 4. 29. *Dewberries* (*Rubus cæsius*) he mentions nowhere else.

167. *Eyes.* Johnson says: "I know not how Shakespeare, who commonly derived his knowledge of nature from his own observation, happened to place the glow-worm's light in his eyes, which is only in his tail." But, as Mason suggests, the poet may have intended to designate the lights of the insect as *eyes* without any reference to their situation. For other allusions to the glow-worm, see *V. and A.* 621, *M. W.* v. 5. 82, *Ham.* i. 5. 89, and *Per.* ii. 3. 43.

168. *To have my love to bed.* Cf. *T. of S.* ind. 2. 39: "Or wilt thou sleep? we'll have thee to a couch," etc.

170. *To fan the moonbeams*, etc. The notion that moonlight is injurious to one sleeping in it is still current among the superstitious. Cf. *Oth.* v. 2. 109.

171. *Do him courtesies.* Cf. *T. of S.* iv. 2. 91: "to do you courtesy," etc. So we have "do respect" (*Lear*, ii. 2. 137), "do salutation" (*Rich. III.* v. 3. 210, *J. C.* iv. 2. 5), "do obsequious sorrow" (*Ham.* i. 2. 92), etc.

176. *Cry your worships mercy.* That is, I beg your pardon. Cf. *M. W.* iii. 5. 27, *Much Ado*, i. 2. 26, *T. G. of V.* v. 4. 94, etc. In *Oth.* v. 1. 93, we have, "I cry you gentle pardon." Some eds. print "worship's."

179. *Desire you of more acquaintance.* Steevens quotes *An Humorous Day's Mirth*, 1599: "I do desire you of more acquaintance"; Greene, *Groatsworth of Wit*, 1621: "craving you of more acquaintance," etc. See also Spenser, *F. Q.* ii. 9. 42: "If it be I, of pardon I you pray."

180. *If I cut my finger*, etc. Alluding to the household use of cobweb for stopping the effusion of blood.

184. *Squash.* An immature peascod. Cf. *T. N.* i. 5. 166: "as a squash is before it is a peascod"; *W. T.* i. 2. 160: "this kernel, this squash, this gentleman." Our Yankee word *squash* is of wholly different origin.

189. *Your patience.* An ironical reference to the proverb, "as hot as mustard." The passage (like *T. of S.* iv. 3. 23) shows that the English use of mustard with roast beef dates back to the time of S. Cf. the association of capers with mutton in *T. N.* i. 3. 129, and of apple-sauce with goose in *R. and J.* ii. 4. 83–85.

191. *I promise you.* I assure you. Cf. *M. W.* iii. 2. 72, *Much Ado*, iv. 2. 47, etc.

196. *The moon*, etc. Cf. ii. 1. 159. Walker considers it an allusion to the supposed origin of dew in the moon, and compares *Mach.* iii. 5. 23; also Fletcher, *Faithful Shepherdess*, iv. 4: —

"Showers of more price, more orient, and more round,
Than those that hang upon the moon's pale brow."

198. *Enforced.* Violated; as in *T. A.* v. 3. 38, *Cymb.* iv. 1. 18, etc.

199. *Love's.* Pope's emendation for the "lovers" of the early eds. Though the change is not absolutely necessary on metrical grounds (the extra unaccented syllable in "lover's" being admissible), I agree with Furness that there can hardly be a doubt that S. wrote *love's.* "To tie up one's tongue" was a common phrase = to be silent. Cf. *Cynthia's Revels:* "Tye up your tongue, mungril"; *Women Pleased:* "First, there's to tye your tongue up," etc.

SCENE II. — 3. *In extremity.* To the utmost, in the extreme. Cf. *Ham.* iii. 2. 178: "In neither aught, or in extremity," etc. *Must,* because of the love-juice.

5. *Night-rule.* According to some authorities, a corruption of *night-revel* (from the old spelling "night-reuel"); but Nares suggests that it means "such conduct as generally *rules* in the night." Halliwell-Phillipps cites the old statutes of London, as given by Stowe: "No man shall, after the houre of nine at the night, keep any rule whereby any such sudden outcry be made in the still of the night, as making any affray," etc. See also Middleton, *Tom Tyler and his Wife:* "Here is good rule! — . . . here is pretty rule!"

9. *Patches.* Clowns. Cf. *M. of V.* ii. 5. 46: "The patch is kind enough"; *Temp.* iii. 2. 71: "Thou scurvy patch!" *Macb.* v. 3. 15: "What soldiers, patch?" etc. Furness thinks that here the word may mean "merely *ill-dressed* fellows, or, as Johnson has it, *tatterdemalions.*"

Mechanicals. Mechanics. Used as a noun again in 2 *Hen. VI.* i. 3. 196; as an adjective in the same sense, in *J. C.* i. 1. 3, *M. W.* ii. 2. 90, and 2 *Hen. IV.* v. 5. 38.

13. *Barren sort.* Dull company. Cf. *T. N.* i. 5. 90: "such a barren rascal"; *Ham.* iii. 2. 46: "barren spectators," etc. For

sort, cf. 21 below: "many in sort" (that is, many in a flock, many together); *Rich. II.* iv. 1. 245: "a sort of traitors"; *2 Hen. VI.* ii. 1. 167: "a sort of naughty persons," etc. See also *Psalm*, lxii. 3 (Prayer-Book version): "Ye shall be slain, all the sort of you."

Thick-skin was a common term of contempt for a country clown. S. uses it again in *M. W.* iv. 5. 2. Cf. *Albion's England*, 1602: "That he, so foul a thick-skin, should so fair a lady catch," etc. The idea is an old one. See Holland's *Pliny*, i. 346: "Some measure not the finenesse of spirit and wit by the puritie of bloud, but suppose that creatures are brutish, more or lesse, according as their skin is thicker or thinner."

14. *Presented.* See on iii. 1. 65.

15. *In.* Into; as often.

17. *Nole.* Also spelled *nowl.* It means properly the top of the head, but is also used for the head itself. Cf. Spenser, *F. Q.* vii. 7. 39: "For yet his noule was totty of the must" (unsteady from the effects of the new wine); *Mirror of Magistrates*: "All kinds of causes in their craftie noles," etc.

19. *Mimic.* Actor; with perhaps a touch of contempt. S. uses the word only here.

21. *Choughs.* The *Corvus monedula* (Schmidt). Cf. *Macb.* iii. 4. 125, *Temp.* ii. 1. 266, *Lear*, iv. 6. 13, etc.

25. *At our stamp.* Johnson wished to change this to "at a stump," since fairies are not represented as stamping, or as big enough to stamp with much force; but it is not necessary to suppose that much force was needed for the exercise of fairy power. Steevens quotes what Oberon says, iv. 1. 85 below: —

> "Sound, music! Come, my queen, take hands with me,
> And rock the ground whereon these sleepers be."

Scot, in his *Discoverie of Witchcraft*, 1584, represents Robin Goodfellow, when offended, as crying "What have we here? Hemton, hamten, here will I never more tread nor stampen."

26. *He.* This one; antithetical to the preceding *one.*

30. *Yielders.* Cf. 1 *Hen. IV.* v. 3. 11: "I was not born a yielder."

36. *Latch'd.* Caught, infected; or more probably, according to the *New Eng. Dict.*, from *latch*, a form of *leach*, meaning to water or wet. The other *latch* (= catch) occurs in *Macb.* iv. 3. 195, *Lear*, ii. 1. 54 (folio reading), and *Sonn.* 113. 6. Cf. Spenser, *Shep. Kal.*, March: —

> "From bough to bough he lepped light,
> And oft the pumies latched."

40. *Of force.* Of necessity; used only in connection with *must.* Cf. *L. L. L.* i. 1. 148, *M. of V.* iv. 1. 56, *J. C.* iv. 3. 203, etc. *Perforce* is used in the same sense; as in 90 below.

44. *Breath.* Language; as often. See on ii. 1. 148. Cf. iv. 2. 42 below and *M. for M.* v. 1. 122: —

> "Shall we thus permit
> A blasting and a scandalous breath to fall
> On him so near us?"

45. *Chide.* See on ii. 1. 142.

48. *Being o'er shoes*, etc. Cf. *Macb.* iii. 4. 136: —

> "I am in blood
> Stepp'd in so far that, should I wade no more,
> Returning were as tedious as go o'er."

55. *With the Antipodes.* A common expression. Cf. *Rich. II.* iii. 2. 49: "While we were wandering with the Antipodes." See also *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 273 and *M. of V.* v. 1. 127.

56. *Murther'd.* The folio has "murdred" here, and "murderer" in 58 and 60; but "mutrherer" [*sic*] in 57 and "murther" in 26.

57. *Dead.* Pale. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* i. 1. 71: "so dead in look, so woe-begone."

61. *Venus.* The planet is again alluded to in 107 below; also in 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 286, 1 *Hen. VI.* i. 2. 144, and *T. A.* ii. 3. 30. For *sphere*, see on ii. 1. 7.

70. *Brave touch.* Brave stroke; ironical.

71. *Worm.* Serpent. Cf. *Macb.* iii. 4. 29, *A. and C.* v. 3. 243, 256, 261, 268, 282, etc. Schmidt remarks that "it is in this sense undoubtedly that Venus calls Death 'earth's worm,' *V. and A.* 933."

72. *Doubler tongue.* See on ii. 2. 9.

74. *On a mispris'd mood.* On a mistaken fancy. S. uses *misprised* nowhere else. Cf. *misprision* in 90 below.

78. *Therefore.* Therefor; for that. Cf. *Matthew*, xix. 27.

80. *So.* Inserted by Pope. All the early eds. read: —

> "And from thy hated presence part I: see me no more
> Whether he be dead or no."

Furness would point thus: "part I. So," etc.

81. *Whether.* See on i. 1. 69.

87. *If for his tender*, etc. If I wait a little for the offer it will make me.

90. *Misprision.* Mistake. Cf. *Sonn.* 87. 11, *Much Ado*, iv. 1. 187, *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 98, etc.

92. *Holding troth.* Keeping faith. See on ii. 2. 36.

93. *Confounding.* Breaking. It is often = destroying, ruining, etc. See *M. of V.* iii. 2. 278, *Rich. II.* iii. 4. 60, etc. Cf. the use of *confusion* in i. 1. 149.

96. *Fancy-sick.* Lovesick. See on i. 1. 155. *Cheer* = face; as in *M. of V.* iii. 2. 314, etc. Cf. Spenser, *F. Q.* i. 1. 2: "But of his cheere did seeme too solemne sad, etc.

97. *That costs the fresh blood dear.* Alluding to the old superstition that every sigh was indulged at the expense of a drop of blood. Cf. 2 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 61, 63, 3 *Hen. VI.* iv. 4. 22, *Ham.* iv. 7. 123, and *Much Ado*, iii. 1. 78. A relative often takes a singular verb, though the antecedent be plural.

101. *Swifter than arrow*, etc. Cf. *R. and J.* i. 4. 5: "a Tartar's painted bow of lath." Douce quotes Golding's *Ovid*: —

"and though that she
Did fly as swift as arrow from a Turkye bowe."

For *Tartar*, cf. 263 below.

103. *Hit with Cupid's archery*. See ii. 1. 163 above.

112. *Mistook*. S. uses both *mistook* and *mistaken* as the participle.

113. *A lover's fee*. This may mean a lover's reward or recompense, in a general sense; but, according to Halliwell-Phillipps, the phrase had the specific meaning of "three kisses." He quotes an old MS. ballad (of about 1650): "How many, saies Batt; why, three, saies Matt, for that's a mayden's fee"; and Warner, *Albion's England*: "Or Mercurie had apted me to plead for lovers fees."

114. *Fond pageant*. Silly show. On *fond*, cf. 317 below; also *V. and A.* 1021, *Sonn.* 3. 7, *M. of V.* ii. 9. 27, iii. 3. 9, *J. C.* iii. 1. 39, etc. Here the meanings of *silly* and *doting* seem blended, as in ii. 2. 88. *Pageant* means usually a theatrical exhibition, literal or figurative. Cf. *Temp.* iv. 1. 155: "this insubstantial pageant"; *L. L. L.* v. 1. 118: "show, or pageant, or antique, or firework"; *A. Y. L.* iii. 4. 55: "a pageant truly played," etc. S. uses *pageant* once as a verb (= play, mimic) in *T. and C.* i. 3. 151: "He pageants us."

119. *Needs*. Of necessity. *Alone* = unique, unparalleled. Abbott explains it as = "above all things."

121. *Preposterously*. Perversely, contrary to nature or reason. Cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 2. 112, *Oth.* i. 3. 62, etc.

123. *Come*. The quarto reading; the folios have "comes."

124. *Vows so born*. That is, being so born.

127. *The badge of faith*. Alluding to the badges (that is, family crests) anciently worn on the sleeves of servants and retainers (Steevens). Cf. *Temp.* v. 1. 267: —

> "Mark but the badges of these men, my lords,
> Then say if they be true";

R. of L. 1054: "A badge of fame to slander's livery," etc. In *Sonn.* 44. 14, tears are called "badges of either's love."

128. *Advance.* Show. Cf. *Much Ado*, iii. 1. 10: "princes, that advance their pride," etc.

140. *Cherries.* Cf. v. 1. 190: "cherry lips"; *Rich. III.* i. 1. 94: "A cherry lip."

141, 142. *High Taurus' snow*, etc. Makes the snow of Mount Taurus look black as a crow.

144. *Princess.* "Demetrius terms it *princess of pure white* because its whiteness exceeded all other whiteness, and *seal of bliss* because it was to confirm the happiness of her accepted lover" (Dyce). On *seal of bliss*, cf. *A. and C.* iii. 13. 125: —

> "My playfellow, your hand; this kingly seal
> And plighter of high hearts."

See also *K. John*, ii. 1. 20 and *M. for M.* iv. 1. 6.

150. *Join in souls.* Join heartily. Several needless emendations have been made.

153. *Superpraise.* Used by S. nowhere else. *Parts* = gifts, endowments, qualities. Cf. *Sonn.* 17. 4, *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 118, etc. The singular is used in the same sense in *L. L. L.* iv. 1. 32, *Ham.* iv. 7. 77, etc.

156. *Rivals, to mock.* Rivals in mocking.

157. *Trim.* Fine, nice; often, as here, ironical. Cf. *T. and C.* iv. 5. 33, *T. A.* v. 1. 96, etc.

158. *Conjure.* Accented by S. on either syllable, without regard to the meaning. Thus we have *conjure* in the magical sense, in *R. and J.* ii. 1. 26, *Oth.* i. 3. 105, etc.; and *cónjure* = solemnly appeal to, in *M. for M.* v. 1. 48, *Macb.* iv. 1. 50, etc.

159. *Of noble sort.* Of noble nature. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* v. 2. 18: "of vile sort," etc. Malone explains *sort* here as = quality or

rank; a meaning which it sometimes has in S. Cf. *M. for M.* iv. 4. 19, *Much Ado*, i. 1. 7, 33, *Hen. V.* iv. 7. 142 and iv. 8. 80.

160. *Extort.* Take away (make impatient), or perhaps = exhaust.

169. *I will none.* I will none of her, will have nothing to do with her. Cf. *T. N.* i. 3. 113: "She will none of me," etc.

171. *To her.* Changed by Johnson and many editors to "with her"; but this does not seem absolutely required. The intervening *guest-wise* suggests going *to* her as a *guest* or visitor, not to dwell with her permanently.

172. *Home return'd.* Cf. *Sonn.* 109. 5: —

> "That is my home of love; if I have rang'd,
> Like him that travels I return again."

Johnson quotes Prior: —

> "No matter what beauties I saw in my way,
> They were but my visits; but thou art my home.

175. *Abide.* The folio reading. The 1st quarto has "Aby," which many editors adopt, though it is not used elsewhere by S. For *abide* in this sense, cf. *J. C.* iii. 1. 95: "Let no man abide this deed," etc. See also *Id.* iii. 2. 113.

177. *His function.* Its office. See on ii. 1. 95. *Function* is elsewhere used of bodily organs; as in *Sonn.* 113. 3, *L. L. L.* iv. 3. 332, *Hen. VIII.* iii. 2. 187, etc.

188. *Oes.* Orbs. S. elsewhere uses *O* for anything round. See *L. L. L.* v. 2. 45, *Hen. V.* prol. 13, and *A. and C.* v. 2. 81. Steevens quotes John Davies of Hereford's *Microcosmos*, 1605: "Which silver oes and spangles over-ran"; and *The Partheneia Sacra*, 1633: "the purple canopy of the earth, powdered over and beset with silver oes," etc. Cf. Bacon, *Essay* 37: "And *Oes*, or *Spangs*, as they are of no great Cost, so they are of most Glory."

194. *In spite of.* In derision of, in order to spite. Cf. *R. and J.* i. 1. 85 and 1 *Hen. VI.* ii. 4. 106.

195. *Injurious Hermia.* Cf. 3 *Hen. VI.* iii. 3. 78: "injurious Margaret"; *Cor.* iii. 3. 69: "thou injurious tribune," etc.

197. *Derision.* A quadrisyllable, like *partition* in 210 below. See also i. 1. 149, 152, etc.

200. *Chid.* S. uses both *chid* and *chidden* as the participle; the latter always before a noun. Cf. *J. C.* i. 2. 184. See line 312 below. On *hasty-footed time*, cf. *Sonn.* 19. 6: "swift-footed Time."

201. *O, is all.* The reading of quartos and 1st folio. The later folios have "O, and is all"; but *O* may be a dissyllable.

202. *Childhood innocence.* Often printed with a hyphen; but nouns are often used by S. as adjectives.

203. *Like two artificial gods.* Like two creators in art. *Artificial* = artful (a word not used by S.) in *Per.* v. 1. 72: "thy prosperous and artificial feat."

204. *Needles.* Many eds. follow Steevens in printing "neelds," an old way of spelling the word; but the metre allows the extra unaccented syllable here, as often.

205. *Sampler.* Such as our grandmothers used to embroider as *samples* of their needlework. The word is used by S. only here and in *T. A.* ii. 4. 39.

208. *Incorporate.* Cf. *C. of E.* ii. 2. 124: "undividable, incorporate"; *Hen. V.* v. 2. 494: "their incorporate league," etc. The word is a contracted participle; like *articulate* (1 *Hen. IV.* v. 1. 72), *suffocate* (*T. and C.* i. 3. 125), etc.

213. *Two of the first, like,* etc. The allusion is to "the double coats in heraldry that belong to man and wife as *one person*, but which have but *one crest*" (Douce).

214. *Due.* Belonging. See on i. 1. 154.

215. *Rent.* Rend; the reading of all the early eds. S. uses the word six times; as in *Macb.* iv. 3. 168, *T. A.* iii. 1. 261, etc. It is found in *Jeremiah*, iv. 30.

230. *Affection.* A quadrisyllable. See on 197 above.

232. *Grace.* Good fortune, or favour. See on ii. 2. 89 above.

233. *Hung upon.* Clung to. Cf. 260 below.

237. *Persever.* The regular spelling and accent in S. We have it rhyming with *ever* in *A. W.* iv. 2. 36–37:

> "Say thou art mine, and ever
> My love as it begins so shall persever."

So *perseverance* is accented on the second syllable. See *T. and C.* iii. 3. 150 and *Macb.* iv. 3. 93.

239. *Each at other.* Cf. *Macb.* i. 3. 155: "each to other" (so also in *A. and C.* ii. 2. 138), etc.

240. *Well carried.* Well carried out, as we should say. Cf. *Much Ado*, iv. 1. 212, *Hen. VIII.* i. 1. 100, etc.

242. *Argument.* Subject (of merriment). Cf. 1 *Henry IV.* ii. 2. 100: "it would be argument for a week," etc.

248. *She.* That is, Hermia.

257. *Ethiope.* Cf. *R. and J.* i. 5. 48: "Like a rich jewel in an Ethiope's ear," etc. The word is used adjectively in *A. Y. L.* iv. 3. 35: "Such Ethiope words, blacker in their effect."

257, 258. *No, no, sir*, etc. The 1st quarto reads "No, no; heele Seeme to breake loose"; the 2d quarto, "No, no, hee 'l seeme to breake loose" (as one line); the 1st folio, "No, no, Sir, seem to break loose" (one line), which is followed by the other folios. Malone combined the two readings: "No, no, he 'll — Sir, seem to break loose," etc., and explained the passage thus: "Demetrius, I suppose, would say, — 'No, no: he 'll not have the resolution to disengage himself from Hermia.' But turning abruptly to Lysander, he addresses him ironically: 'Sir, seem to break loose,' etc." The meaning is essentially the same if we adopt the folio reading, except that the whole is addressed to Lysander: "No, no, sir, you are not really trying to get free; keep up the pretence of doing so, you coward!" On the whole this seems preferable to the quarto reading, though there is not much to choose between them.

260. *Cat.* Cf. *Temp.* ii. 2. 86: "here is that which will give

language to you, cat." On *burr*, cf. *M. for M.* iv. 3. 189: "Nay, friar; I am a kind of burr; I shall stick."

263. *Tartar.* See on 101 above. Cf. *Macb.* iv. 1. 29.

264. *Potion.* The reading of 1st quarto; the other early eds. have "poison." There is small choice between them.

265. *Sooth.* See on ii. 2. 129. Cf. *J. C.* ii. 4. 20: "Sooth, madam, I hear nothing," etc.

267. *Bond.* For other instances of play upon the word, see *C. of E.* iv. 4. 128 and *Cymb.* v. 4. 28.

272. *Wherefore.* Accented on the final syllable; as in *Lear*, ii. 4. 113. *What news, my love!* = what novelty is this!

275. *Since night you loved me.* For the tense after *since*, cf. ii. 1. 146.

282. *Juggler.* Metrically a trisyllable. This is a common lengthening of such words (see p. 121 above), but Furness thinks the pause may count as a syllable.

Canker-blossom. Some understand this to mean the canker-worm, like *cankers* in ii. 2. 3; but Schmidt and Furness explain it as the blossom of the canker (see *Much Ado*, i. 3. 28) or wild rose. S. does not use the compound elsewhere, but he has *canker-bloom* in *Sonn.* 54. 5, where the scentless flower is contrasted with "sweet roses."

286. *Touch.* Sense, feeling. Cf. *Temp.* v. 1. 21, *Macb.* iv. 2. 9, *Rich. III.* i. 2. 71, etc.

290. *Compare.* Cf. *V. and A.* 8: "sweet above compare"; *Sonn.* 130. 14: "with false compare," etc.

291. *Urg'd.* Cf. *M. of V.* i. 144: "I urge this childhood proof"; *Rich. II.* iii. 1. 4: "Too much urging your pernicious lives," etc.

292. *Personage.* Personal appearance. Cf. *T. N.* i. 5. 164: "Of what personage and years is he?" See also quotation from *Roister Doister* in note on v. 1. 108 below.

296. *Painted maypole.* Steevens quotes Stubbes's *Anatomie of Abuses*, 1583, in which the "Maie pole" is said to be "some tyme painted with variable colours," etc.

298. *But that my nails*, etc. For the suggestion of old-time manners, even among ladies of rank, cf. 2 *Hen. VI.* i. 3. 145, where the Duchess of Gloucester, after Queen Margaret has boxed her ears, says: —

> "Could I come near your beauty with my nails,
> I'd set my ten commandments in your face!"

where *ten commandments* is profane slang for *nails*.

300. *Curst.* Shrewish; as the next line shows. Cf. 341, 439 below. The word is often used in this sense in *T. of S.*; as in i. 1. 185, i. 2. 70, 128, ii. 1. 187, 294, 307, etc. We have the comparative *curster* in *T. of S.* iii. 2. 156, and the superlative in ii. 1. 315.

302. *Right.* Like our *downright*.

304. *Something.* Often used adverbially.

307. *Evermore.* Always; as often in S. Cf. *M. of V.* i. 1. 52, *Rich. II.* ii. 3. 65, etc.

310. *Stealth.* Stealing (going secretly). Cf. iv. 1. 160 below. See also *Sonn.* 77. 7, *T. N.* i. 5. 316, etc.

312. *Chid.* See on 200 above.

317. *Fond.* Foolish. See on iii. 2. 114.

323. *Shrewd.* Shrewish. Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 1. 20: "so shrewd of thy tongue"; *T. of S.* i. 1. 185: "curst and shrewd," etc.

329. *Minimus.* The Latin for *minim;* used by S. only here. Cf. Milton, *P. L.* vii. 482: "Minims of nature."

Knot-grass. The *Polygonum aviculare* (Schmidt), which was anciently supposed to hinder the growth of an animal or child. Steevens quotes Beaumont and Fletcher, *Knight of the Burning Pestle*, ii. 2: "Should they put him into a straight pair of gaskins, 't were worse than knot-grass, he would never grow after it"; and *The Coxcomb*, ii. 2: "a boy . . . kept under for a year with milk and knot-grass." Mr. H. N. Ellacombe (in the London *Garden*, May 19, 1877) suggests another explanation of *hindering*. He cites Johnstone, who says that in the north of England, the plant "being difficult to cut in the harvest time, or to pull in the process

of weeding, it has obtained the soubriquet of *the Deil's lingels*" (*lingel* = *thong*). Shakespeare's "hindering" weed cannot be the *knot-grass* mentioned by Milton, *Comus*, 542: —

"the savoury herb
Of knot-grass dew-besprent."

This must be one of the pasture grasses — perhaps *Agrostis stolonifera*, as it is said to be in Aubrey's *Natural History of Wilts.*

333. *Intend.* Pretend. Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 2. 35, *T. of S.* iv. 1. 206, etc.

335. *Abide.* See on 175 above.

337. *Of thine or mine.* Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 27: "Which, of he or Adrian, for a good wager, first begins to crow?"

338. *Cheek by jole.* A common phrase then as since, but not elsewhere used by S.

339. *Coil.* Turmoil, confusion. Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 207, *C. of E.* iii. 1. 48, *R. and J.* ii. 5. 67, etc. *Long* is equivalent to *along*, but not a contraction of that word.

344. *I am amaz'd*, etc. This line is not in the folios.

352. *Sort.* Fall out, happen. Cf. *Much Ado*, iv. 1. 242: "And if it sort not well, you may conceal her"; *Id.* v. 4. 7: "Well, I am glad that all things sort so well," etc.

353. *Jangling.* Cf. *L. L. L.* ii. 1. 225: "Good wits will be jangling," etc.

356. *Welkin.* Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 4: "the sea, mounting to the welkin's cheek"; *M. W.* i. 3. 101: "By welkin and her star," etc. It is an adjective in *W. T.* i. 2. 136: "your welkin eye."

357. *Acheron.* A river in the infernal regions; often put for the locality. Cf. *T. A.* iv. 3. 44 and *Macb.* iii. 5. 15.

359. *As.* Not unfrequently used for *that* after *so*. Cf. *L. L. L.* ii. 1. 174, *Rich. III.* iii. 4. 41, etc. *Another* = the other; as often in S. Cf. *T. of S.* iii. 2. 46: "a pair of boots, . . . one buckled, another laced"; *W. T.* v. 2. 82: "one eye declined for the loss of her husband, another elevated," etc.

360. *Sometime.* S. uses *sometime* and *sometimes* interchangeably. See on ii. 1. 36.

365. *Leaden legs.* Cf. *Rich. III.* v. 3. 105 (also *R. of L.* 124): "leaden slumber"; *J. C.* iv. 3. 268: —

> "O murderous slumber,
> Lay'st thou thy leaden mace upon my boy?" etc.

Batty (batlike) is used by S. only here.

367. *Liquor.* Juice; as in ii. 1. 175. *Virtuous* = powerful. Cf. 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 5. 76: —

> "like the bee, culling from every flower
> The virtuous sweets."

See also Milton, *Comus*, 621: "every virtuous plant and healing herb"; *Il Pens.* 113: "the virtuous ring and glass"; Spenser, *F. Q.* ii. 12. 26: "his virtuous staffe," etc.

368. *His might.* Its power. See on ii. 1. 95 above.

370. *Derision.* A quadrisyllable. See on i. 1. 149.

373. *Date.* Duration; as often. Cf. *Sonn.* 18. 4: "And summer's lease hath all too short a date"; *K. John*, iv. 3. 106: "My date of life," etc.

374. *Whiles.* Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 217, 284, 310, *J. C.* i. 2. 209, etc.

379. *Night's swift dragons.* The chariot of Night was fabled to be drawn by dragons. Cf. *T. and C.* v. 8. 17: "The dragon wing of Night"; *Cymb.* ii. 2. 48: "Swift, swift, you dragons of the night," etc. See also Milton, *Il Pens.* 59: "While Cynthia checks her dragon yoke."

380. *Aurora's harbinger.* The morning star. S. mentions Aurora only here and in *R. and J.* i. 1. 142; but see on 389 below. Cf. Milton, *Song on May Morning*, 1: "Now the bright morning star, day's harbinger."

381. *At whose approach*, etc. Cf. Milton, *Hymn on the Nativity*, 232: —

"The flocking shadows pale
Troop to the infernal jail;
Each fettered ghost slips to his several grave;
And the yellow-skirted fayes
Fly after the night-steeds, leaving their moon-lov'd maze."

383. *That in crossways*, etc. "The ghosts of self-murderers, who are buried in cross-roads; and of those who, being drowned, were condemned (according to the opinion of the ancients) to wander for a hundred years, as the rights of sepulture had never been regularly bestowed on their bodies" (Steevens).

384. *Wormy beds.* Cf. Milton, *On the Death of a Fair Infant*, 31: "thy beauties lie in wormy bed."

385. *Upon.* For the transposition, cf. *Rich. III.* ii. 3. 138, *A. and C.* ii. 1. 51, etc.

386. *Exile.* Both noun and verb are accented by S. on either syllable.

387. *Black-brow'd night.* Cf. *R. and J.* iii. 2. 20: "come, loving, black-brow'd night." See also *K. John*, v. 6. 17: "in the black brow of night."

389. *The morning's love.* Aurora. Steevens takes it to be Tithonus, the aged husband of Aurora. Holt White and others refer it to Cephalus (the "Shafalus" of v. 1. 195), the lover of the goddess. Cf. Milton, *Il Pens.* 122:—

"Till civil-suited Morn appear,
Not tricked and frounced as she was wont
With the Attic boy to hunt," etc.

Halliwell-Phillipps says: "Oberon merely means to say metaphorically that he has sported with Aurora, the morning's love, the first blush of morning; and that he is not, like a ghost, compelled to vanish at the dawn of day." But cf. iv. 1. 93–96.

391. *Eastern gate.* Cf. Milton, *L'All.* 59:—

"Right agains' the eastern gate,
Where the great sun begins his state."

392. *Neptune.* Cf. ii. 1. 126. Walker would omit the comma after *beams*, because it is the beams that turn the streams to gold; but that is the meaning with either pointing. Cf. the description of the sun in *Sonn.* 33. 3: —

> "Kissing with golden face the meadows green,
> Gilding pale streams with heavenly alchemy";

and *K. John*, iii. 1. 77: —

> "To solemnize this day the glorious sun
> Stays in his course and plays the alchemist,
> Turning with splendour of his precious eye
> The meagre cloddy earth to glittering gold."

402. *Drawn.* With drawn sword. Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 308: "Why are you drawn?"

412. *We 'll try no manhood here.* That is, we 'll not fight here. Cf. *Much Ado*, v. 1. 66: "Do challenge thee to trial of a man."

417. *That. So* that; as often.

418. *Me.* Personal pronouns are often used reflexively, as here.

421. *Ho, ho, ho!* The traditional shout of Robin Goodfellow. See the old ballad quoted on ii. 1. 3 and 36 above. So in Drayton's *Nymphidia:* "Ho, ho, quoth Hob, God save thy grace," etc. The devil, however, as Ritson and others have pointed out, had an earlier title to it. Thus in *Histriomastix* a "roaring devil" enters, with the *Vice* on his back, *Iniquity* in one hand, and *Juventus* in the other, crying: "Ho, ho, ho! these babes mine are all." So in *Gammer Gurton's Needle:* "But Diccon, Diccon, did not the devil cry *ho, ho, ho?*" and again: —

> "By the masse, ich saw him of late cal up a great blacke devill.
> O, the knave cryed *ho, ho*, he roared and he thundered."

Cf. also the epitaph attributed to Shakespeare: "Ho! quoth the Devil, 'tis my John a Combe"; and Goulart's *Histories*, 1607: "The fellow . . . sawe the Diuills in horrible formes, some sitting, some standing, others walking, some ramping against the walles,

but al of them assoone as they beheld him ran unto him, crying *Hoh, Hoh,* what makest thou here?"

422. *Abide me.* Await me, meet me in combat. *Wot* (= know) is used only in the present tense and the participle *wotting.* The former occurs often in S. (cf. iv. 1. 161 below), the latter only in *W. T.* iii. 2. 77.

426. *Buy.* Pay for. Cf. *C. of E.* iv. 1. 81, 1 *Hen. IV.* v. 3. 7, etc.

429. *To measure out my length.* Cf. *Lear,* i. 4. 100, *Cymb.* i. 2. 25, *A. Y. L.* ii. 6. 2, etc.

432. *Shine comforts.* Third person imperative, or "optative subjunctive"; like *sleep* just below. Furness thinks that *comforts* "may be an accusative"; but S. never makes *shine* transitive.

434. *Detest.* The word probably has its ordinary meaning, as Schmidt explains it; but Walker believes that it is used in the sense of the original *detestari,* to cry out against. He cites other passages which he considers parallel; as *Cymb.* ii. 5. 33, *A. and C.* iv. 14. 57, etc.

435. *And sleep,* etc. And now may sleep, etc. Malone quotes *Cleopatra,* 1594: —

> "Therefore come thou of wonders wonder chief,
> That open can'st with such an easy key
> The dore of life, come, gentle cunning thief,
> That from ourselves so steal'st ourselves away."

437. *Three.* Metrically a dissyllable.

438. *Makes.* A singular verb is often used with numbers. Cf. *J. C.* i. 3. 154: "Three parts of him is ours," etc. See also iii. 1. 42 above.

439. *Curst.* See on 300 above.

441. *Females.* We do not find in S. the modern vulgarism of *female* for *woman.* He uses the word only in its strict sense, as opposed to *male,* except when he puts it into the mouth of clowns. Cf. *L. L. L.* i. 1. 267: "with a child of our grandmother Eve,

a female; or, for thy more sweet understanding, a woman"; *A. Y. L.* v. 1. 54: "Therefore, you clown, abandon, — which is in the vulgar leave, — the society, — which in the boorish is company, — of this female, — which in the common is woman," etc.

443. *Bedabbled with the dew.* Cf. *V. and A.* 703: "the dew-bedabbled wretch."

461. *Jack shall have Jill.* These are generic titles for a man and a woman. "All shall be well, Jack shall have Jill," occurs in Heywood's *Epigrammes upon Proverbes*, 1567. So *The Scourge of Folly*, 1611: "All shall bee well, and Jack shall have Jill." Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 885: "Jack hath not Jill."

463. *The man shall have his mare*, etc. Cf. Ray's *English Proverbs*: "All is well, and the man hath his mare again"; and Fletcher's *Chances*: "Why, the man has his mare again, and all 's well."

ACT IV

SCENE I. — 1. *Come, sit thee down*, etc. Cf. Dekker, *The Shoemaker's Holiday*, ii. 1: —

> "Here sit thou downe upon this flowry banke,
> And make a garland for thy Lacies head, —
> These pinkes, these roses, and these violets,
> These blushing gille-flowers, these marigoldes."

2. *Coy.* Stroke, caress. S. uses the verb only here and in *Cor.* v. 1. 6, where it means to disdain. Steevens quotes *The Arraignment of Paris*, 1584: "Plays with Amyntas' lusty boy, and coys him in the dales"; and Golding's *Ovid*: —

> "and with her hand had coid
> The dragons' reined neckes," etc.

Amiable = lovely. Wright compares *Psalms*, lxxxiv. 5: "How amiable are thy tabernacles," etc. See also Milton, *P. L.* iv. 250.

8. *Mounsieur.* The spelling of all the early eds. It may be retained here (like *Cavalery* below) as in keeping with the character. So "Mounseur" in *M. W.* ii. 3. 59. It should be noted, however, that "Monsieur," "Mounsieur," "Mounsier," etc., are forms quite promiscuously used by the printers of that time.

16. *Overflown.* Overflowed. So in *A. W.* ii. 1. 142 we have *flown* = flowed.

19. *Neaf.* Fist, or hand; also spelled *neif.* Used by S. nowhere else except in 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 200 (Pistol's speech). Cf. Ben Jonson, *Poetaster:* "reach me thy neaf."

20. *Leave your courtesy.* Cf. *L. L. L.* iv. 2. 147: "Stay not thy compliment; I forgive thy duty: adieu."

23. *Cavalery.* Cavalero; as printed in the 2d and later folios. Cf. *M. W.* ii. 3. 77: "Cavalero Slender"; 2 *Hen. IV.* v. 3. 62: "all the cavaleros about London." As Grey points out, we ought to have "Cavalery Peaseblossom" here, Cobweb having been sent after a honey-bag.

28. *A reasonable good ear,* etc. Schmidt remarks that weavers were supposed to be good singers, and particularly given to singing psalms, being most of them Calvinists and refugees from the Netherlands. Cf. *T. N.* ii. 3. 61: "a catch that will draw three souls out of one weaver"; 1 *Hen. IV.* ii. 4. 147: "I would I were a weaver; I could sing psalms or anything."

29. *The tongs and the bones.* According to J. R. Planché, the *tongs* were a rural instrument of music, struck by a "key." The *bones,* or *knockers,* were made of bone or hard wood, and were played between the fingers, as by boys and Ethiopian minstrels in our day. The folio has here the stage-direction, "*Musicke Tongs, Rurall Musicke.*"

33. *Bottle of hay.* A truss of hay. S. has the phrase nowhere else. It is still used in England in the old proverb, "to look for a needle in a bottle of hay." In a court-book dated 1551, the half-penny bottle of hay is said to weigh two pounds and a half, and the penny bottle five pounds. See another example of the word on

p. 13 above. *Bottle*, in this sense, must not be confounded with *pottle* (*M. W.* ii. 1. 223, iii. 5. 30, *Oth.* ii. 3. 87, etc.), which means in S. a large tankard (originally a measure of two quarts), and is still used in England to denote "a long tapering basket, holding about a quart."

42. *So doth the woodbine*, etc. This passage has been the subject of much dispute. The question is whether the *woodbine* and the *honeysuckle* are the same plant or different ones. If the former, we must adopt Steevens's explanation: "So the woodbine, that is, the sweet honeysuckle, doth gently entwist the barky fingers of the elm, and so does the female ivy enring the same fingers." But it is certain that the woodbine and the honeysuckle were sometimes considered as different plants. Farmer quotes one of Taylor's poems: "The woodbine, primrose, and the cowslip fine, the honisuckle, and the daffadill." In a passage in Ben Jonson, the blue bindweed is mentioned as twining with the honeysuckle, and Gifford thinks the former synonymous with the woodbine. In Lynacre's *Herball*, the woodbine is made synonymous with the withwind, another name for the bindweed.

43. The *ivy* is called *female* "because it always requires some support, which is poetically called its husband" (Steevens). Cf. *C. of E.* ii. 2. 176: —

> "Thou art an elm, my husband, I a vine,
> Whose weakness married to thy stronger state
> Makes me with thy strength to communicate."

See also Milton, *P. L.* v. 215. Spenser (*F. Q.* i. 1. 8) speaks of "The vine-propp Elme." The figure is a common one in the Latin poets. *Enrings* and *barky* are used by S. only here.

47. *Dotage.* Doting affection. Cf. *Much Ado*, ii. 3. 175: "I would she had bestowed this dotage on me"; *A. and C.* i. 1. 1: "this dotage of our general's," etc.

49. *Favours.* Presents, love-tokens (Schmidt). Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 30, 125, 130, 292, 468, etc.

54. *Like round and orient pearls.* See on ii. 1. 15 above.

58. *Patience.* A trisyllable, as in i. 1. 152.

66. *Other.* Plural; as in *T. and C.* i. 3. 89: "Amidst the other," etc.

67. *May all.* All may; or *they* may be implied.

69. *But.* Except; as often. *Fierce* = wild, disordered; as in *Cymb.* v. 5. 382, *Ham.* i. 1. 121, etc.

73. *Cupid's flower* is the one referred to in ii. 1. 163; and *Dian's bud* is the other "herb" of ii. 1. 181, which was to "take the charm from off her sight." Steevens takes the latter to be the bud of the *Agnus castus.* Cf. Lynacre's *Herball:* "The vertue of this herbe is, that he wyll kepe man and woman chaste"; Gerard's *Herbal,* 1597: "*Agnus castus* is a singular medicine and remedie for such as would willingly live chaste."

82. The *five* are of course the two pairs of lovers and Bottom.

83. The folio has here the stage-direction "*Musick still,*" which probably means "music, softly," or "soft music"—"such as charmeth sleep."

88. *Solemnly.* Ceremoniously. Cf. *Rich. II.* iv. 1. 319, *Rich. III.* i. 2. 214, *Hen. VIII.* i. 2. 165, etc.

90. *Posterity.* The reading of the 2d quarto and the folios, which, on the whole, I prefer to the "prosperity" of the 1st quarto. The latter is perhaps favoured by ii. 1. 73, and the former by v. 1. 407 fol.

95. *Sad.* Serious, grave. Cf. *M. of V.* ii. 2. 205: "sad ostent"; *Much Ado,* i. 1. 185: "but speak you this with a sad brow?" *Id.* i. 3. 62: "in sad conference," etc.

96. *Trip we,* etc. See on iii. 2. 381 above. Cf. v. 1. 386: "Following darkness like a dream." *Trip* is often used of fairies, nymphs, and the like. Cf. *V. and A.* 146: "Or, like a fairy, trip upon the green"; *Temp.* iv. 1. 46: "Each one tripping on his toe." See also *M. W.* v. 4. 1, v. 5. 96, and 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 1. 87. In v. 1. 419 below, we have "Trip away"; and in v. 1. 396, "dance it trippingly."

104. *Observation.* Cf. i. 1. 167, and also 132 below.

105. *Vaward.* Forepart, beginning; as in 2 *Hen. IV.* i. 2. 199: "the vaward of our youth." Elsewhere it is = vanguard; as in *Hen. V.* iv. 3. 130, *Cor.* i. 6. 53, etc. *Vanguard* is not found in S., and *van* occurs only in *A. and C.* iv. 6. 9.

106. "The fondness of Theseus for hunting — 'and namely the grete hert *in May*' — is particularly noted in the *Knightes Tale*" (Halliwell-Phillipps).

107. *Uncouple.* Loose the hounds from their couples, set them loose. Cf. *V. and A.* 674: "Uncouple at the timorous flying hare"; *T. A.* ii. 2. 3: "Uncouple here, and let us make a bay." S. uses the word only three times.

110, 111. For *confusion* and *conjunction*, see on i. 1. 149.

112. *Cadmus.* Not elsewhere mentioned by S.

113. *Crete.* Cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 1. 77: "O hound of Crete," etc. The Cretan and Spartan hounds were much esteemed.

The bear. So in all the early eds., but changed by Hanmer to "the boar." The hunting of the bear is, however, referred to more than once in the *Knightes Tale.* Malone reminds us that in the *W. T.* (iii. 3) Antigonus is destroyed by a *bear*, which is chased by hunters. Cf. *V. and A.* 884: —

> "For now she knows it is no gentle chase,
> But the blunt boar, rough bear, or lion proud."

115. *Chiding.* The word often means "to make an incessant noise." Cf. *A. Y. L.* ii. 1. 7: "And churlish chiding of the winter's wind"; *Hen. VIII.* iii. 2. 197: "As doth a rock against the chiding flood," etc. See on ii. 1. 142 above.

120. *So flew'd, so sanded.* Having the same large hanging chaps and the same sandy colour. Cf. Golding's *Ovid*: —

> "With other twaine, that had a syre of Crete,
> And dam of Sparta: tone [the one] of them called Jollyboy, a great
> And large-flew'd hound."

S. uses *flew'd* and *sanded* nowhere else.

121. *With ears*, etc. Steevens quotes Heywood, *Brazen Age*, 1613: —

> " the fierce Thessalian hounds,
> With their flag ears, ready to sweep the dew
> From their moist breasts."

123. *Like bells*, etc. That is, like a chime of bells. In the time of S. great attention was paid to the music of a pack of hounds. Furness remarks that this was true " even to the days of Addison " ; and he cites the description of good old Sir Roger de Coverley's pack of stop-hounds, whose cry made up " a complete consort."

124. *Tuneable.* Used by S. only here and in i. 1. 184 above.

125. *Holla'd.* Cf. *Lear*, iii. 1. 55: —

> " That way, I 'll this — he that first lights on him
> Holla the other."

Holla was the sportsman's call to the hounds, or the rider's to his horse, to stop. Cf. *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 257: " Cry 'holla' to thy tongue, I prithee; it curvets very unseasonably " ; *V. and A.* 284: —

> " What recketh he his rider's angry stir,
> His flattering 'holla,' or his 'Stand, I say!' "

126. *Thessaly.* Mentioned by S. only here and in *A. and C.* iv. 13. 2.

127. *Soft.* Hold, stop. Cf. *M. of V.* i. 3. 59, iv. 1. 320, *Temp.* i. 2. 449, etc. So *soft you ;* as in *Much Ado*, v. 1. 207, *Ham.* iii. 1. 88, etc.

134. *In grace of.* In honour of. Cf. *Ham.* i. 2. 124: " in grace whereof," etc.

139. *Saint Valentine.* The anachronism is as obvious as it is amusing. Halliwell-Phillipps quotes Wither's *Epithalamia*, 1633: " Most men are of opinion that this day [St. Valentine's] every bird doth chuse her mate for that yeare."

147. *Half sleep, half waking.* Perhaps *sleep* and *waking* are both nouns, " loosely connected with the verb reply," as Wright sug-

gests. This seems the simplest and most satisfactory of sundry explanations that have been given.

152. *Where we might.* The reading of the 1st quarto; the other early eds. have "might be." *Without* would then = beyond (cf. i. 2. 88); as, indeed, it may with the present reading and pointing.

160. *Stealth.* See on iii. 2. 310 above.

163. *Following.* So in 1st quarto; "followed" in the other early eds. For *fancy*, see on i. 1. 155.

164. *Wot.* See on iii. 2. 422.

166. *Melted as*, etc. So in all the early eds. Capell made it read "as doth the snow"; and Pope, "Is melted as."

167. *Gawd.* See on i. 1. 33.

173. *In sickness.* The early eds. have "a sickness." The emendation is Farmer's, and is generally adopted; but it is not absolutely necessary. Wright and Furness suspect some corruption.

174. *Come.* Having returned.

179. *Overbear.* Overrule; as in *K. John*, iv. 2. 37. See ii. 1. 92 for a slightly different meaning.

181. *Knit.* United. Cf. *K. John*, iii. 1. 226: "This royal hand and mine are newly knit." See also i. 1. 172 and ii. 2. 47 above.

182. *And, for.* And because; introducing a subordinate, not a coördinate sentence (Schmidt). Cf. *Temp.* i. 2. 272: "And for thou wast a spirit too delicate"; *M. for M.* ii. 1. 28: —

> "You may not so extenuate his offence
> For I have had such faults";

that is, the fact that I have been guilty is no excuse for him. Here the modern meaning of *for* would be nonsensical.

189. *With parted eye.* Perhaps = "as one would if one's eyes were not in focus with each other" (Deighton).

192. *Mine own, and not mine own.* "Helena, I think, means to say that, having *found* Demetrius *unexpectedly*, she considered her property in him as insecure as that which a person has in a jewel that he has *found* by *accident;* which he knows not whether he

shall retain, and which therefore may properly enough be called *his own and not his own*" (Malone).

192, 193. *Are you sure That we are awake?* These words are in the quartos, but not in the folios. White thinks they were intentionally omitted.

203. *God's my life.* Cf. *Much Ado*, iv. 2. 72: "God 's my life, where 's the sexton ?"

207. *Go about.* Undertake, attempt. Cf. *Much Ado*, i. 3. 11: "I wonder that thou goest about . . . to apply a moral medicine to a mortifying mischief." See also *R. of L.* 412, *M. for M.* iii. 2. 215, *Hen. V.* iv. 1. 212, etc.

210. *Patched.* Probably referring to the motley dress of the professional fool. See *A. Y. L.* ii. 7. 13: "a motley fool," etc. Cf. *patches*, iii. 2. 9 above.

211. *The eye of man*, etc. This kind of humour, as Halliwell-Phillipps remarks, was so common that it is not necessary to consider, as some do, that S. intended here to parody Scripture. Boswell quotes *Selinus*, 1594: "keeping your hands from lying and slandering, and your tongues from picking and stealing." Cf. the old comedy of *Wily Beguiled*: —

> "I Pegg Pudding, promise thee William Cricket,
> That I'le hold thee for mine own dear lilly,
> While I have a head in mine eye, and face on my nose,
> A mouth in my tongue, and all that a woman should have,
> From the crown of my foot, to the soal of my head."

See also *T. N.* ii. 3. 58: "To hear by the nose, it is dulcet in contagion."

214. *Ballad.* "Ballet" in the early eds. Cotgrave translates *balade* by "a ballet."

217. *A play.* So in the early eds.; "the play" and "our play" have been suggested as emendations.

218. *At her death.* That is, at Thisbe's. Theobald reads "after death" (that is, his own in the play), which is plausible.

Scene II. — 4. *Transported.* Probably = Quince 's *translated* (iii. i. 108), that is, transformed.

8. *Discharge.* Perform. See on i. 2. 89 above.

9. *The best wit of any.* For the "confusion of construction," see on v. 1. 246 below.

14. *Naught.* The forms *naught* and *nought* were used interchangeably, but the former (as noted by Schmidt and others) seems to have been preferred when the word meant *naughty*, that is, wicked or worthless. *A thing of naught* = a wicked thing. There is a play upon *nought* and *naught* in *Rich. III.* i. 1. 96–100. We have *nought* (= *nothing*) in iii. 2. 462.

18. *Made men.* Cf. *Temp.* ii. 2. 32: "there would this monster make a man," etc. Halliwell-Phillipps quotes *Terence in English*, 1614: "I am well, safe, in good case, a made man for ever."

20. *Scaped.* Not "'scaped," as usually printed. Cf. Bacon. *Adv. of L.* ii. 14. 9: "such as had scaped shipwreck"; Palsgrave, *Fr. Dict.* 1530: "I scape or slyppe thorow a narowe place, *je me elapse*."

26. *Hearts.* Often used as a familiar address. Cf. *Temp.* i. 1. 6, *M. W.* iii. 2. 88, *T. N.* ii. 3. 16, etc.

35. *Strings.* To tie on the false beards. For *pumps*, cf. *T. of S.* iv. 1. 136: "And Gabriel's pumps were all unpink'd i' the heel." See also *R. and J.* ii. 4. 64, 66.

38. *Preferred.* Offered for approval, or put on the *brief*, or list, mentioned in v. 1. 42. Cf. *T. of A.* iii. 4. 49, *J. C.* iii. 1. 28, etc.

42. *Sweet breath.* See on ii. 1. 148.

ACT V

Scene I. — 3. *Antique.* The 1st folio has "anticke" here. *Antick* and *antique* (the accent always on the first syllable) are used promiscuously in the early eds. without regard to the meaning.

Toys = trifles, nothings. Cf. *W. T.* iii. 3. 39, *Macb.* ii. 3. 99, *Cymb.* iv. 2. 193, etc.

4. *Seething brains.* Cf. *W. T.* iii. 3. 64: "these boiled brains of nineteen and two-and-twenty"; and *Temp.* vi 1. 59: —

"thy brains,
Now useless, boil'd within thy skull."

5. *That.* For *that* after *such*, Cf. *J. C.* i. 3. 116, *W. T.* i. 2. 263, etc.

8. *All compact.* All composed, made up. Cf. *V. and A.* 149: "Love is a spirit all compact of fire"; *T. A.* v. 3. 88: "My heart is not compact of flint nor steel," etc. For the form, see on iii. 2. 208.

9, 10. The first folio, which is followed by some modern eds., points the passage thus: —

"One sees more diuels than vaste hell can hold;
That is the mad man."

11. *Helen's beauty.* The Grecian beauty is often alluded to by S. See *Sonn.* 53. 7: "On Helen's cheek all art of beauty set"; *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 153: "Helen's cheek, but not her heart," etc. "By *a brow of Egypt* S. means no more than the *brow of a gypsey*" (Steevens).

12. *The poet's eye.* Malone notes that this seems to have been imitated by Drayton in his description of Marlowe: —

"that fine madness still he did retain,
Which rightly should possess a poet's brain."

21, 22. *Or in the night,* etc. These lines are enclosed in brackets by White as probably an interpolation. Halliwell-Phillipps quotes Quarles: —

"Is the road fair? we loyter; clogg'd with mire?
We stick or else retire:
A lamb appears a lion; and we fear
Each bush we see 's a bear."

For *fear* = object of fear, cf. *Ham.* iii. 3. 25.

25. *More witnesseth*, etc. Shows something more than mere images of fancy.

26. *Constancy*. Consistency. There is no other clear instance of this sense of the word in S., but we have *constant* = consistent, in *T. N.* iv. 2. 53: "my constant question." Schmidt makes *constantly* = consistently, in ii. 3. 160 of the same play.

27. *But, howsoever*, etc. But, anyhow, it is strange and wonderful.

30. *More than to us*, etc. May more joy than comes to us, etc.

34. *After-supper*. Probably the "rere-supper," or the *dessert* following the *supper*, as Staunton explains it. Schmidt makes it = "the time after supper." Cf. *Rich. III.* iv. 3. 31: "at after-supper."

38. *Philostrate*. The folios have "*Egeus*"; but see i. 1. 11.

39. *Abridgment*. Pastime. Cf. *Ham.* ii. 2. 439, where the word means "that which is my pastime and makes me be brief" (Schmidt).

42. *Brief*. List. Cf. *A. and C.* v. 2. 138, etc. *Ripe* = ready. The 1st quarto has "ripe"; the other early eds. have "rife," which some defend.

44. In the quartos, lines 44–60 are given to *Theseus*, as in the text; in the folios, Lysander reads the brief, and Theseus comments upon the successive items. Knight remarks that "the division of so long a passage is clearly better, and is perfectly natural and proper"; and Halliwell-Phillipps adds that "the dignity of the monarch is better sustained by this arrangement." Verplanck makes the plausible suggestion that the change into dialogue was an afterthought to add to the theatrical effect.

The battle with the Centaurs. The battle of the Centaurs and the Lapithæ was a favourite subject with the classical sculptors and poets.

48. *The riot*, etc. The killing of Orpheus by the Thracian women while they were celebrating the orgies of Bacchus. Cf. Milton, *Lycidas*, 58: —

> "What could the Muse herself that Orpheus bore,
> The Muse herself, for her enchanting son,
> When by the rout that made the hideous roar
> His gory visage down the stream was sent,
> Down the swift Hebrus to the Lesbian shore?"

52. *The thrice three Muses*, etc. Some make this refer to Spenser's *Teares of the Muses*, 1591; others, to Spenser's death (in which case, as that event did not occur until January, 1598–99, the lines must have been an addition to the original text); and others, to the death of Robert Greene, in 1592. It is doubtful, however, whether the passage is anything more than an allusion to the general neglect of learning in that day.

54. *Critical.* Censorious; used by S. only here and in *Oth.* ii. 1. 120: "nothing, if not critical."

58. *Merry and tragical.* "In ridicule of the absurd titles of some of our ancient dramas" (Halliwell-Phillipps). See on i. 2. 11. Lupton's *All for Money*, 1578, is called a "pitiful comedy" on the title-page, and a "pleasant tragedy" in the prologue.

59. *Strange snow.* The reading of all the early eds., and not so *very* strange, but many emendations have been suggested; as "scorching snow" (Hanmer), "strange shew" (Warburton), "strange black snow" (Upton and Capell), "strong snow" (Mason), "swarthy snow" (Staunton), etc. *Wondrous* is here a trisyllable.

65. *One player fitted.* See on i. 2. 64.

74. *Toil'd.* Exerted, strained. Cf. *Ham.* i. 1. 72: "toils the subject"; and *Rich. II.* iv. 1. 96; "toil'd with works of war." *Unbreath'd* (used by S. only here) = unpractised. Cf. *breathed* = in full vigour (like the French *mis en haleine*) in *A. Y. L.* i. 2. 230 and *T. of S.* ind. 2. 50. Halliwell-Phillipps quotes *Scots Philomythie*, 1616: —

> "But being trencher-fed, the weather hot,
> Themselvs unbreath'd, to hunting used not."

75. *Nuptial.* See on i. 1. 125.

76. *And.* "Frequently found in answers in the sense of *you are right and* or *yes and*, the *yes* being implied" (Abbott).

79. *Intents.* "Used both for *endeavour* and for *the object of endeavour*," with reference to both *stretch'd* and *conn'd* (White).

82, 83. *For never*, etc. Steevens notes that Ben Jonson has expressed a similar sentiment in *Cynthia's Revels*, when Cynthia is preparing to see a masque: —

> "Nothing which duty and desire to please,
> Bears written in the forehead, comes amiss."

87. *Gentle sweet.* Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 373: "Fair gentle sweet."

88, 89. There may be an intentional play on *kind* and *kinder*.

90. *To take what they mistake.* That is, to take in good part even their blundering attempt.

91. *Noble respect*, etc. A noble mind "accepts the effort to please without regard to the merit of the performance" (Wright); or "takes the will for the deed."

93. *Where I have come*, etc. Walker quotes Browne, *Britannia's Pastorals*, ii. 1 (written after the play): —

> "If e'er you saw a pedant gin prepare
> To speak some graceful speech to Master Mayor,
> And being bashful, with a quaking doubt,
> That in his eloquence he may be out;
> He oft steps forth, as oft turns back again,
> And long 't is ere he ope his learned vein:
> Think so Marina stood."

96. *Periods.* Full stops. Cf. *R. of L.* 565: —

> "She puts the period often from his place,
> And midst the sentence so her accent breaks
> That twice she doth begin ere once she speaks."

98. *Have broke.* For the ellipsis of the nominative, cf. iv. 1. 67 above.

101. *Fearful.* Full of fear, timorous. Cf. 164 below.

105. *To my capacity.* In my opinion.

106. *Address'd.* Ready. Cf. *J. C.* iii. 1. 29: "He is address'd"; 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 4. 5: "Our navy is address'd," etc.

107. *Flourish of trumpets.* Steevens remarks that the prologue was anciently ushered in by trumpets. He quotes Dekker, *The Guls Hornbook*, 1609: "Present not yourselfe on the stage (especially at a new play) until the quaking prologue hath (by rubbing) got cullor in his cheekes, and is ready to give the trumpets their cue that hee's upon point to enter." The stage-direction that follows is, in the quartos, "*Enter the Prologue*"; in the 1st folio, "*Enter the Prologue. Quince.*"

108. *If we offend,* etc. The prologue is carefully mispointed in the early eds. As Knight remarks, it was meant to be spoken thus: —

> "If we offend, it is with our good will
> That you should think we come not to offend,
> But with good will to show our simple skill;
> That is the true beginning of our end.
> Consider then. We come; but in despite
> We do not come. As minding to content you,
> Our true intent is all for your delight.
> We are not here that you should here repent you.
> The actors are at hand; and by their show
> You shall know all that you are like to know."

For a similar piece of mispunctuation, see Udall's *Roister Doister* (1553), iii. 4, in Doister's letter to Dame Custance, which Merygreeke reads as follows: —

> "Sweete mistresse whereas I love you nothing at all,
> Regarding your substance and richesse chiefe of all,
> For your personage, beautie, demeanour and wit,
> I commend me unto you never a whit,
> Sorie to heare report of your good welfare," etc.

In the first line the comma should have been after "you," and the next one after "richesse"; and in the fourth line, after "you," not after "whit."

113. *Minding.* Intending. Cf. 3 *Hen. VI.* iv. 1. 8, 64, 106, 140.

123. *A recorder.* A kind of flageolet. Cf. *Ham.* iii. 2. 303, 360. See also Milton, *P. L.* i. 551: —

> "the Dorian mood
> Of flutes and soft recorders."

Nares says the instrument was so called because birds were taught to *record* by it; one of the meanings of *record* being to warble. Cf. Browne, *Britannia's Pastorals*, ii. 4: —

> "The nymph did earnestly contest
> Whether the birds or she recorded best";

Drayton, *Ecl.*: —

> "Fair Philomel, night-musicke of the spring,
> Sweetly records her tuneful harmony."

Not in government. "Not a regular tune" (Schmidt). Cf. what Hamlet says of the instrument (iii. 2. 372): "Govern these ventages with your finger and thumb."

126. *Who is next?* Here the 1st folio has the stage-direction, "*Tawyer with a Trumpet before them*," taken probably from the prompter's book. Halliwell-Phillipps discovered that *Tawyer* was a player in Shakespeare's company. He was buried, June, 1625, at St. Saviour's, where he is recorded in the sexton's note-book as "William Tawier, Mr. Heminge's man."

127. *Gentles.* Used as a familiar address (*M. W.* iii. 2. 92, etc.), especially to an audience, as here and in 427 below. See also *Hen. V.* prol. 8 and ii. chor. 25.

130. *Certain.* "A burlesque on the frequent recurrence of *certain* as a bungling rhyme in poetry more ancient than the age of S." (Steevens).

131. *Present.* Represent. See on iii. 1. 59.

139. *Grisly.* Grim, terrible. Cf. *R. of L.* 926: "grisly care"; 1 *Hen. VI.* i. 4. 47: "My grisly countenance." See also Gray, *Eton College*, 82: "A grisly troop"; *The Bard*, 44: "a grisly band," etc. Not to be confounded with *grizzly*.

Lion hight by name. So in all the early eds. Theobald transposed it for the sake of the rhyme, to "by name Lion hight"; but the irregularity may have been intentional. For *hight* (= is called), cf. *L. L. L.* i. 1. 171, 258, and *Per.* iv. prol. 18.

142. *Did fall.* Often used transitively by S. Cf. *Temp.* ii. 1. 296, v. 1. 64, *J. C.* iv. 2. 26, etc. For the line, cf. the legend in Chaucer: "And, as she ran, her wimple she let fall"; and Golding's *Ovid* (p. 130 above): "And as she fled away for haste, she let her mantle fall."

146, 147. *Whereat, with blade*, etc. A burlesque of the excessive use of alliteration in many writers of the time. Cf. i. 2. 30 fol. Sidney ridicules the same affectation in his *Astrophel and Stella*, 15:—

> "You that do Dictionaries' method bring
> Into your rimes running in rattling rows."

Halliwell-Phillipps quotes Puttenham, *Arte of English Poesie*, 1589: "Ye have another manner of composing your metre nothing commendable, specially if it be too much used, and is when our maker takes too much delight to fill his verse with wordes beginning all with a letter, as an English rimer that said: 'The deadly droppes of darke disdaine, do daily drench my due desartes.' And as the monke we spake of before wrote a whole poeme to the honor of Carolus Calvus, every word in his verse beginning with C."

158. *Crannied.* Used by S. nowhere else. The whole passage was evidently suggested by Golding's version of the story.

163. *Right and sinister.* Right and left. For the accent of *sinister* (on the penult), cf. *Hen. V.* ii. 4. 85.

170. *Grim-look'd.* Grim-looking. Cf. *well-spoken* (= well-speaking) and *well-behaved*, which are still in use.

180. *O wicked wall!* Cf. Chaucer: —

> "Thus would thei saine, alas! thou wicked wal
> Thorough thine envie thou us lettist al."

182. *Sensible.* Possessed of sense, or perception. Cf. *Cor.* i. 3. 95: "I would your cambric were sensible as your finger," etc.

187. *Pat.* See on iii. 1. 2.

192. *I see a voice.* See on iv. 1. 211.

196. *Limander.* For Leander, as *Helen* for Hero. *Shafalus* and *Procrus* are for Cephalus and Procris. A poem by Henry Chute, entitled *Procris and Cephalus*, was entered on the Stationers' Register by John Wolf in 1593, and probably published the same year. See also on iii. 2. 389.

203. *Tide.* Betide, happen. Cf. Chaucer, *T. and C.* i. 908: "Thee shulde never have tidde so faire a grace" (so fair a fortune should never have happened to thee).

206. *Mural down.* The quartos have "Moon used"; the folios, "morall downe." *Mural* is Pope's emendation, and is generally adopted. *Mure* = wall, is found in 2 *Hen. IV.* iv. 4. 119; *mural* does not occur elsewhere in S., and is properly an adjective. If S. wrote "mural down," some pun in the words is probably lost, as White and Furness suggest.

209. *Hear.* Farmer says: "This alludes to the proverb, 'Walls have ears.' A *wall* between almost any *two neighbours* would soon be *down*, were it to exercise this faculty without previous *warning*."

218. *Beasts in, a man*, etc. The early eds. put the comma after *beasts;* Rowe made the change.

224. *A lion fell, nor else*, etc. Probably *lion fell* = lion's skin; but perhaps S. wrote "No lion fell," as Rowe and Staunton read. Cf. iii. 1. 34 fol.

242. *No crescent.* Not a waxing moon, but "in the wane," as Theseus says just below.

244. *The horned moon.* Douce thinks there is here a burlesque reference to the materials of the lantern, in which horn was gener-

ally used instead of glass. He quotes the *History of the two Maids of Moreclacke*, 1609: "Shine through the horne, as candles in the eve, to light out others." From Manningham's *Diary* (MS. Harl.) we learn that among the "devises" at Whitehall, in 1601, was "the man in the moone with thornes on his backe, looking downeward." Middleton also refers to this mythological personage: "as soon as he comes down, and the bush left at his back, Ralph is the dog behind him."

246. *Of all the rest.* This "confusion of construction" is not uncommon nowadays.

250. *In snuff.* A play upon words, *in snuff* being a common phrase for *in anger*. Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 2. 22: "You'll mar the light by taking it in snuff"; and 1 *Hen. IV.* i. 3. 37: —

> "And 'twixt his finger and his thumb he held
> A pouncet-box, which ever and anon
> He gave his nose, and took 't away again;
> Who therewith angry, when it next came there,
> Took it in snuff."

251. *I am aweary.* The reading of the 1st quarto. The folios have "weary," which would make the speech verse; but elsewhere during the clowns' performance Hippolyta speaks in prose.

269. *Moused.* Cf. *Macb.* ii. 4. 13: "a mousing owl"; *K. John*, ii. 1. 354: "mousing the flesh of men" (that is, tearing it, as a cat does a mouse).

270, 271. *And then came*, etc. Mr. Spedding conjectures that these lines should be transposed, and some editors make the change.

274. *Gleams.* The conjecture of Knight, adopted by the Cambridge editors and others. The quartos and the 1st folio have "beames," the later folios "streams." The latter was sometimes applied to rays of light; as in *The Mirror for Magistrates*, ed. 1587: —

> "Which erst so glistned with the golden streames
> That chearfull Phœbus spred downe from his sphere," etc.

But *streams* was probably only the guess of the editor of the 2d folio, and *gleams* is to be preferred for the alliteration. S. does not use the noun *gleams* elsewhere, but the verb occurs in *R. of L.* 1378: "And dying eyes gleam'd forth their ashy lights."

286. *Thread and thrum.* "An expression borrowed from weaving: the *thread* being the substance of the warp; the *thrum*, the small tuft beyond, where it is tied" (Nares). Cf. Herrick, *Poems:*—

> "Thou who wilt not love, doe this,
> Learne of me what woman is,
> Something made of thred and thrumme,
> A meere botch of all and some."

We have *thrummed* (= made of coarse ends or tufts) in *M. W.* iv. 2. 75: "her thrummed hat."

287. *Quell.* Destroy, kill. Cf. *T. G. of V.* iv. 2. 13, *T. of A.* iv. 3. 163, etc. S. has the word once as a noun (= murder) in *Macb.* i. 7. 72: "our great quell." So *boy-queller* = boy-killer, in *T. and C.* v. 5. 45; and *man-queller* and *woman-queller* = murderer, in 2 *Hen. IV.* ii. 1. 58.

288. *This passion, and the death of a dear friend*, etc. The humour of the passage "consists in coupling the ridiculous fustian of the clown's assumed passion with an event which would, in itself, make a man look sad." Staunton quotes the old proverbial saying: "He that loseth his wife and sixpence hath lost a tester" (the *tester* being = sixpence).

290. *Beshrew.* See on ii. 2. 54.

294. *Cheer.* Countenance. See on iii. 2. 96.

298. *Pap.* Pronounced *pop*, or with "the broad pronunciation, now almost peculiar to the Scotch, but anciently current in England" (Steevens). Cf. rhymes in ii. 1. 48, 49 and 260, 261.

307. *No die but an ace.* Alluding to dice, and playing on *ace* and *ass.*

313. *How chance.* See on i. 1. 129.

319. *Mote.* The early eds. have "moth," the old spelling of *mote.* White changes the name of the fairy *Moth* to "Mote."

Which Pyramus, which Thisbe. Abbott suggests that *which* may here be used for the kindred *whether.*

320. *He for a man . . . God bless us.* This passage is in the quartos, but is omitted in the folios; perhaps on account of the statute of James I. against using the name of God on the stage.

337. *Sisters Three.* The three Fates. Farmer suggested that this passage was probably intended to ridicule one in Richard Edward's *Damon and Pythias,* 1582: —

> "Ye furies, all at once
> On me your torments trie: —
> Gripe me, you greedy greefs,
> And present pangues of death;
> You sisters three, with cruel handes
> With speed come stop my breath."

341. *Shore.* Used instead of *shorn* for the rhyme. We have it as the past tense of *shear* in *Oth.* v. 2. 206: "Shore his old thread in twain."

354. *A Bergomask dance.* A rustic dance as performed by the peasants of Bergomasco, a Venetian province, whose clownish manners were imitated by all the Italian buffoons (Nares). Bottom's "*hear* a Bergomask dance" was of course meant to be nonsense (cf. 192 and iv. i. 211); but, as Mr. Elson tells us (in his *Shakespeare in Music*), dances were often accompanied with singing, and could therefore be *heard* as well as seen.

367. *Palpable-gross.* Palpably gross, or stupid.

368. *The heavy gait of night.* Cf. *Hen. V.* iv. prol. 20: "the cripple tardy-gaited night"; *Rich. II.* iii. 2. 15: "heavy-gaited toads."

371. *Now the hungry lion roars,* etc. Coleridge says of this speech of Puck's: "Very Anacreon in perfectness, proportion, grace, and spontaneity. So far it is Greek: but then add, O!

what wealth, what wild ranging, and yet what compression and condensation of English fancy. In truth, there is nothing in Anacreon more perfect than these thirty lines, or half so rich and imaginative. They form a speckless diamond."

372. *Behowls.* All the early eds. have "beholds"; corrected by Theobald. Cf. *A. Y. L.* v. 2. 119: "'t is like the howling of Irish wolves against the moon."

374. *Fordone.* Exhausted, overcome. Elsewhere it means undone, destroyed. Cf. *Lear*, v. 3. 255: "She fordid herself"; *Id.* v. 3. 291: "Your eldest daughters have fordone themselves"; *Oth.* v. 1. 129: "That either makes me or fordoes me quite," etc.

376. *Screech-owl.* Cf. 2 *Hen. VI.* i. 4. 21, iii. 2. 327, *T. and C.* v. 10. 16, etc. *Screech* (verb or noun) is not elsewhere used by S.

379. *Now it is the time*, etc. Cf. *Ham.* iii. 2. 406: "'T is now the very witching time of night," etc. See also *Macb.* ii. 1. 51.

382. *Church-way.* Used nowhere else by S. Cf. Gray, *Elegy*, 114: "Slow through the churchway path we saw him borne."

384. *The triple Hecate.* Cf. *A. Y. L.* iii. 2. 2: "thrice-crowned queen of night." *Hecate* is always a dissyllable in S., unless we except 1 *Hen. VI.* iii. 2. 64, the authorship of which is doubtful. Ben Jonson, of course, always makes it a trisyllable; Marlowe and Middleton make it a dissyllable; Golding, in his *Ovid*, has used it both ways (Douce).

386. *Following darkness*, etc. See on iv. 1. 96.

387. *Frolic.* Used by S. only as an adjective; and nowhere else except in *T. of S.* iv. 3. 184.

389. *I am sent*, etc. Cf. *M. W.* v. 5. 48: —

> "Where fires thou find'st unrak'd and hearths unswept,
> There pinch the maids as blue as bilberry;
> Our radiant queen hates sluts and sluttery";

and *Id.* v. 5. 59: —

> "About, about,
> Search Windsor Castle, elves, within and out:
>
> * * * * *

> The several chairs of order look you scour
> With juice of balm and every precious flower";

also *R. and J.* i. 4. 88: —

> "This is that very Mab
> That plats the manes of horses in the night,
> And bakes the elf-locks in foul sluttish hairs";

and Drayton, *Nymphidia*: —

> "These make our girls their sluttery rue,
> By pinching them both black and blue,
> And put a penny in their shoe,
> The house for cleanly sweeping."

Nash, in his *Terrors of the Night*, 1594, remarks that "the Robin Goodfellowes, elfes, fairies, hobgoblins of our latter age, . . . pincht maids in their sleep that swept not their houses cleane," etc. So in *Robin Goodfellow; his mad prankes*, etc., 1628, we read: "many mad prankes would they play, as pinching of sluts black and blue, and misplacing things in ill-ordered houses; but lovingly would they use wenches that cleanly were, giving them silver and other pretty toyes, which they would leave for them, sometimes in their shooes, other times in their pockets, sometimes in bright basons and other cleane vessels."

391. *Glimmering light*, etc. Cf. Milton, *Il Pens.* 79: —

> "Where glowing embers through the room
> Teach light to counterfeit a gloom."

401–420. *Now until the break of day*, etc. This passage is given to Oberon in the quartos; in the folios it is called *The Song*, and printed in italics.

404. *Shall blessed be.* The blessing of the bridal bed was a regular part of the marriage ceremony. Cf. Chaucer, *C. T.* 9693: "And whan the bed was with the preest yblessed." See Douce's *Illustrations of Shakespeare*, where there is also the copy of an

ancient cut (from the French romance of *Melusine*) representing the ceremony.

409. *Never mole*, etc. Cf. *K. John*, iii. 1. 46: —

> "Lame, foolish, crooked, swart, prodigious,
> Patch'd with foul moles and eye-offending marks."

Hare-lip is mentioned only here and in *Lear*, iii. 4. 123, where it is ascribed to "the foul fiend," etc. *Prodigious* = portentous; the only meaning it has in S. See the quotation from *K. John* above; also *J. C.* i. 3, 77, etc.

411. *Nativity.* Birth; especially in its astrological relations. Cf. *R. of L.* 538: —

> "For marks descried in men's nativity
> Are nature's faults, not their own infamy."

413. *Consecrate.* Cf. *Sonn.* 74. 6: "Consecrate to thee." See on iii. 2. 208 and on 8 above.

414. *Take his gait.* Take his way. Mason thought that *gait* (or *gate*) meant "the door of each chamber."

415. *Bless.* Steevens cites Chaucer, *C. T.* 3479: —

> "Therwith the night-spel seyde he anon rightes,
> On the foure halves of the hous aboute,
> And on the threisshfold of the dore withoute.
> Lord Jhesu Crist, and seynte Benedight,
> Blesse this hous from every wikkede wight," etc.

In this case, however, the "night-spel" is pronounced *against* the influence of elves and evil spirits; as in *Cymb.* ii. 2. 9: —

> "From fairies and the tempters of the night
> Guard me, beseech ye!"

417, 418. *And the owner*, etc. In the early eds. these lines are transposed. Staunton arranged them as here, getting the hint from an anonymous correspondent of the *London Illustrated News*. Rowe gives "Ever shall it safely rest"; and Dyce, "Ever shall 't in

safety rest." Halliwell-Phillipps follows Malone in retaining the old reading and arrangement, assuming that the nominative *palace* is understood. Such "ellipsis of the nominative" is not uncommon in S. We have an example above in 98, and possibly another in iv. 1. 67; but in the present passage transposing the lines seems on the whole the simplest solution of the difficulty. Printers occasionally make such mistakes nowadays. In the first proof of this book, lines 77, 78 of i. 1. were transposed. The error had been noted by the proof-reader, but in the time of S. proofs were seldom carefully read. Some modern critics have thought they were not read at all, but there is contemporary evidence to the contrary. For instance, at the end of Beeton's *Will of Wit* (1599) we find this note: "What faults are escaped in the printing, finde by discretion, and excuse the author, by other worke that let [hindered] him from attendance to the presse."

429. *An honest Puck.* See on ii. 1. 40 above.

430. *If we have*, etc. "That is, if we have better fortune than we have deserved" (Steevens). S. uses *unearned* only here.

431. *To scape*, etc. To escape being hissed. Cf. *L. L. L.* v. 1. 139:—

"*Holofernes.* Shall I have audience? he shall present Hercules in minority; his enter and exit shall be strangling a snake, and I will have an apology for that purpose.

Moth. An excellent device! so, if any of the audience hiss, you may cry, 'Well done, Hercules! now thou crushest the snake!' that is the way to make an offence gracious, though few have the grace to do it."

435. *Your hands.* That is, your plaudits. Cf. *Temp.* epil. 10: "With the help of your good hands"; and *A. W.* v. 3. 340: "Your gentle hands lend us, and take our hearts."

436. *Restore amends.* A phrase not elsewhere used by S., his ordinary expression being *make amends.* We have *restore* = make amends for, in *Sonn.* 30. 14: "All losses are restored, and sorrows end."

APPENDIX

Comments on Some of the Characters

In dealing with the characters of the play, the first thing that attracts our attention is the extraordinary diversity of the groups, representing the extremes of human station and culture, together with the supernatural element in the fairies. "The heroic magnificence of the princely loves of Theseus and his Amazon bride," mingling classical allusion and fable with the ideas and manners of chivalry, is intertwined with the complicated errors and confusion of the Athenian lovers, due to the magic trickery of Oberon and Puck; and with this are blended the grotesque absurdity of the interlude — itself a burlesque of a romantic and tragic classical story — and the Athenian clowns who perform it. Never before or since were the sublime and the ridiculous, the heroic and the vulgar, the human and the superhuman, so exquisitely and effectively combined in a poetic symphony.

The human characters of the better class are of minor interest, with the single exception of Theseus. As Dowden remarks, "There is no figure in the early drama of Shakespeare so magnificent"; but even Dowden, it seems to me, fails to do full justice to the finer traits of the hero. He calls him "gracious to all," and says that he "will not give unmannerly rebuff to the painstaking craftsmen who have so laboriously done their best to please him." The fact that he is a *gentleman* in the truest sense might well have been more emphasized. The negative reference to his acceptance of the clowns' interlude does not give due credit to the refined courtesy

and consideration with which he welcomes their clumsy effort to do him honour. When Philostrate tells him how they have "toiled their unbreathed memories" to prepare the play, his prompt reply is, "And we will hear it." Philostrate says that really the thing is not worth listening to, unless perchance his lord "can find sport in their intents"; but Theseus replies: —

> "I will hear that play;
> *For never any thing can be amiss*
> *When simpleness and duty tender it.*"

And how admirably is this dwelt upon and impressed in the dialogue that follows! —

> "*Hippolyta.* I love not to see wretchedness o'ercharg'd,
> And duty in his service perishing.
> *Theseus.* Why, gentle sweet, you shall see no such thing.
> *Hippolyta.* He says they can do nothing in this kind.
> *Theseus.* The kinder we, to give them thanks for nothing.
> Our sport shall be to take what they mistake;
> *And what poor duty cannot do, noble respect*
> *Takes it in might, not merit. . . .*
> *Love, therefore, and tongue-tied simplicity*
> *In least speak most, to my capacity.*"

When, as the play is going on, Hippolyta pronounces it the silliest stuff she ever heard, Theseus says: "The best in this kind are but shadows; and the worst are no worse, if imagination amend them." She replies, "It must be your imagination then, and not theirs"; but that is precisely what Theseus means. If the actor has not the imagination to enable him to realize the part, — to *become* for the time the character he personates, — let your imagination supplement his and complete his imperfect rendering. The best theatrical representation is more or less inadequate, and fails in a measure unless it sets the spectator's imagination to work to supply its deficiencies. In other words, "the dramatist must

appeal to the mind's eye rather than to the eye of sense, and the coöperation of the spectator with the poet is necessary."

Later in the performance, when Hippolyta expresses her weariness, Theseus replies: "But yet, in courtesy, we must stay the time"; that is, must see the thing through — "in courtesy," due, he implies, to the humblest no less than to the highest. He makes gentle fun of the poor stuff, but not, like Lysander and Demetrius, in a manner that might hurt the feelings of the thick-skinned actors; and at the close he tells them that their tragedy has been "very notably discharged."

In all this, of course, it is Theseus that speaks, and not the dramatist in his own person; but the Theseus is Shakespeare's Theseus, not the hero of the old Greek myth or of any modern reproduction thereof. Would the poet have made him a true gentleman if he had not believed that the true hero should be a gentleman? And would this conception of the heroic character have occurred to one who was not himself a gentleman? Compare this Theseus with him of *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, who is at best only an heroic brute. He can fight for injured queens, and do great deeds for his own glory; but he has not a particle of the refined humanity that we see in Shakespeare's Theseus. The difference in the treatment of this one character in the two plays is, to my thinking, sufficient proof that they are not the work of the same author. I was once inclined to the opinion that Shakespeare had a hand in *The Two Noble Kinsmen*, but I do not now believe that he wrote a single line of it.

The most impersonal of dramatists cannot entirely conceal his personality in his plays. The heart no less than the hand of the creator is inevitably revealed in certain of his creations. From what *they* are we know in a measure what *he* must have been. The "meanest of mankind," though he had been "the wisest, brightest" withal, could never have produced the Shakespearian Theseus, or Brutus, or Portia, or Imogen. Grapes are not to be gathered of thorns at St. Alban's or anywhere else. They do grow on various

sorts of vines; but the Stratford grapes have an exquisite flavour that could come only from a plant of the finest strain.

Demetrius and Lysander, Helena and Hermia, are but slight sketches, imperfectly individualized, though not without distinctive traits which the critics have seldom troubled themselves to point out. They are, however, inferior — the women in particular — to characters of the same class in *Love's Labour 's Lost* and *The Two Gentlemen of Verona*. Hence some of the critics have assumed that this play must be of earlier date than those — which, on other grounds, is clearly impossible, though the *Dream* (see p. 10 above) appears to contain scattered remnants of very early work. The fact is, Shakespeare was but slightly interested in the human characters of the present play, with the exception of Theseus and Bottom. It was the fairies who chiefly attracted him, and on whom he lavished the wealth of his genius. They have been aptly called "the favourite children of his romantic fancy"; and perhaps, as Drake remarks, "in no part of his works has he exhibited a more creative and visionary pencil, or a finer tone of enthusiasm, than in bodying forth these 'airy nothings,' and in giving them, in brighter and ever-durable tints, once more 'a local habitation and a name.'"

Shakespeare's delineation of these little creatures is one of the most remarkable triumphs of his dramatic art. They are not diminutive human beings with superhuman powers, though in some respects they are like human children. Like young children before they have learned the distinction between right and wrong, they have no moral sense, and little or no comprehension of such sense in the mortals with whom they are associated. Like children, they live in the present, and are quite incapable of reflection. They think and feel like the child. Their loves and their quarrels are like those of the child. Oberon and Titania quarrel over the possession of the pretty changeling boy as two children do about a toy which they both want; and later, when Titania, fascinated with Bottom, ceases to care for the boy and gives him to Oberon, he gets over his petulance, releases her from the magic influence of the love-

juice, and they "make up" and are friends again, like children rather than like lovers.

The tricks they play on the human lovers are like those that children play on one another, without any thought of the suffering they may cause the victims. "Lord, what fools these mortals be!" is Puck's only comment upon the results of his mischief. He is delighted that things befall preposterously, and anticipates more sport when Demetrius and Lysander wake up, for "then will two at once woo one." Titania feels no mortification when she finds that she has been enamoured of Bottom with his ass's head. She only knows that she loathes him now that she has recovered from the infatuation. We cannot help pitying her for the humiliation to which she has been subjected; but our pity is wasted. She is no more capable of feeling humiliated by any such experience than a child would be after it was over. She forgets it, and never recalls it.

As I have intimated, Bottom is the only one of the clownish company who demands any special notice. He is English, like his name, and like all of Shakespeare's low-life folk, no matter in what land or what age he places them. Puck calls him "the shallowest thickskin of the barren" set; but how he lords it over them, and how absolutely they submit to his self-conceited domination! Quince is the nominal manager of the play, but Bottom usurps the office. It is only by flattery that Quince, after Bottom has wanted to assume the parts of Thisbe and the lion, persuades him to take that of Pyramus; for "Pyramus is a sweet-faced man; a proper man, as one shall see in a summer's day; a most lovely gentleman-like man: therefore you must needs play Pyramus." It is Bottom who criticises certain things in the tragedy "that will never please," — the killing of Pyramus and the introduction of that "fearful wild-fowl," the lion, among ladies; and it is he who suggests how these difficulties can be obviated, — by a prologue which shall explain that Pyramus is not Pyramus but Bottom the weaver, and is not killed indeed, and that the lion is no lion but Snug the joiner. It

is he also who devises the ingenious expedient of having the wall represented by "some man or other," with "plaster or rough-cast about him to signify wall."

When Bottom disappears, his companions decide at once that "the play is marred." It is not possible that it can go on: "you have not a man in all Athens able to discharge Pyramus but he"; he "hath the best wit of any handicraft man in Athens, and the best person too, and he is a very paramour for a sweet voice." At the performance of the play he is the only actor who turns aside from his part to speak to the audience in his own person in reply to Theseus and Demetrius; and, the moment after he is dead, he jumps up, and, again assuming the part of stage-manager, asks Theseus whether it will please him "to see the epilogue or to hear a Bergomask dance."

We cannot doubt that in Bottom, in a more broadly humorous way than later in Hamlet's talk with the players, Shakespeare intended a good-natured hit at some of the extravagancies and absurdities of the plays and the actors of his time — the plays in the Ercles vein, with parts to tear a cat in, and actors like Bottom, whose chief humour was for the tyrant, spouting such alliterative rhymes as Bottom gets off: —

> "The raging rocks
> And shivering shocks
> Shall break the locks
> Of prison gates;
> And Phibbus' car
> Shall shine from far,
> And make and mar
> The foolish Fates";

and the "Now, die, die, die, die, die!" with which he finally flops on the stage.

The clowns' play reminds us of the interlude of *The Nine Worthies* in the earlier *Love's Labour's Lost*, where, however, the auditors do not allow the actors so fair a chance, but practically

break up the performance before it is finally interrupted by the arrival of the messenger sent to inform the Princess that her father is dead. The point of the burlesque is much the same in both cases.

As we finish the play, we feel like saying, with our friend Bottom, "I have had a most rare vision!" Or we ask, with Preciosa in *The Spanish Student*, —

> "Is this a dream? O, if it be a dream,
> Let me sleep on, and do not wake me yet!"

For myself, I believe, with Campbell, that Shakespeare must have enjoyed writing it no less than we enjoy reading it. He says: "The play is so purely delicious, so little intermixed with the painful passions from which poetry distils her sterner sweets, so fragrant with hilarity, so bland and yet so bold, that I cannot imagine Shakespeare's mind to have been in any other frame than that of healthful ecstasy when the sparks of inspiration thrilled through his brain in composing it. I have heard, however, an old critic object that Shakespeare might have foreseen it would never be a good acting play; for where could you get actors tiny enough to couch in flower-blossoms? . . . But supposing that it never could have been acted, I should only thank Shakespeare the more that he wrote here as a poet and not as a playwright. And as a birth of his imagination, whether it was to suit the stage or not, can we suppose the Poet himself to have been insensible of its worth? Is a mother blind to the beauty of her own child? No! nor could Shakespeare be unconscious that posterity would doat on this, one of his loveliest children. How he must have chuckled and laughed in the act of placing the ass's head on Bottom's shoulders! He must have foretasted the mirth of generations unborn at Titania's doating on the metamorphosed weaver, and on his calling for a repast of sweet peas. His animal spirits must have bounded with the hunter's joy while he wrote Theseus's description of his well-tuned dogs and of the glory of the chase. He must have been

happy as Puck himself while he was describing the merry Fairy, and all this time he must have been self-assured that his genius was 'to put a girdle round the earth,' and that souls, not yet in being, were to enjoy the revelry of his fancy."

The Time-Analysis of the Play

Mr. P. A. Daniel (*Trans. of New Shakspere Society*, 1877–79, p. 149) sums this up as follows (cf. p. 21 above): —

Day 1. Act I.

Day 2. Acts II., III., and part of sc. i. Act IV.

Day 3. Part of sc. i. Act IV., sc. ii. Act IV., and Act V.

List of Characters in the Play

The numbers in parentheses indicate the lines the characters have in each scene.

Theseus: i. 1(65); iv. 1(41); v. 1(136). Whole no. 242.

Egeus: i. 1(30); iv. 1(11). Whole no. 41.

Lysander: i. 1(53); ii. 2(44); iii. 2(59); iv. 1(10); v. 1(12). Whole no. 178.

Demetrius: i. 1(2); ii. 1(23), 2(2); iii. 2(62); iv. 1 (25); v. 1(28). Whole no. 142.

Philostrate: v. 1(24). Whole no. 24.

Quince: i. 2(51); iii. 1(39); iv. 2(9); v. 1(35). Whole no. 134.

Snug: i. 2(3); iv. 2(4); v. 1(9). Whole no. 16.

Bottom: i. 2(54); iii. 1(94); iv. 1(51), 2(19); v. 1(61). Whole no. 279.

Flute: i. 2(5); iii. 1(7); iv. 2(12); v. 1(34). Whole no. 58.

Snout: i. 2(2); iii. 1(10); v. 1(12). Whole no. 24.

Starveling: i. 2(2); iii. 1(3); iv. 2(2); v. 1(7). Whole no. 14.

Hippolyta: i. 1(5); iv. 1(7); v. 1(24). Whole no. 36.

Hermia: i. 1(56); ii. 2(26); iii. 2(80); iv. 1(3). Whole no. 165.

Helena: i. 1(43); ii. 1(34), 2(32); iii. 2(116); iv. 1(4). Whole no. 229.

Oberon: ii. 1(79), 2(8); iii. 2(63); iv. 1(46); v. 1(28). Whole no. 224.

Titania: ii. 1(72), 2(8); iii. 1(34); iv. 1(25); v. 1(4). Whole no. 143.

Puck: ii. 1(37), 2(18); iii. 1(11), 2(101); iv. 1(3); v. 1(36). Whole no. 206.

Peaseblossom: iii. 1(4); iv. 1(1). Whole no. 5.

Cobweb: iii. 1(4); iv. 1(1). Whole no. 5.

Moth: iii. 1(3). Whole no. 3.

Mustardseed: iii. 1(4); iv. 1(2). Whole no. 6.

Fairy: ii. 1(28), 2(24). Whole no. 52.

In the above enumeration, parts of lines are counted as whole lines, making the total of the play greater than it is. The actual number of lines in each scene (Globe edition numbering) is as follows: i. 1(251), 2(114); ii. 1(268), 2(162); iii. 1(206), 2(463); iv. 1(225), 2(46); v. 1(445). Whole no. in the play, 2180.

A Midsummer-Night's Dream is the shortest of the plays, with three exceptions: *The Comedy of Errors* (1778 lines); *The Tempest* (2065); and *Macbeth* (2109).

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